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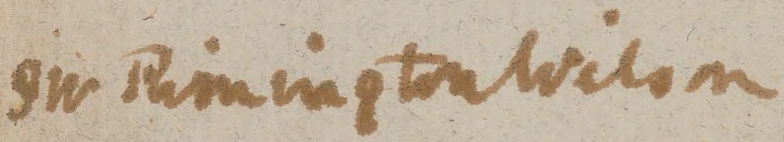

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THE UNIVERSAL DIRECTORY FOR TAKING ALIVE AND DESTROYING RATS,

And all other Kinds of

FOUR-FOOTED AND WINGED VERMIN,

In a METHOD hitherto unattempted: Calculated for the Uſe of the GENTLEMAN, the FARMER, and the WARRENER.

By ROBERT SMITH,
RAT-CATCHER to the Princeſs AMELIA.

DUBLIN:
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INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

HOWEVER trifling and contemptible the following Treatiſe may appear to ſome perſons, the author flatters himſelf that it will be productive of great public utility, although the ſubject is but low and humble.

MANY ingenious writers have greatly diſtinguiſhed themſelves in treating of that noble and uſeful animal the horſe; of the method of breeding horned cattle, ſheep, and other animals ſerviceable and beneficial to mankind; this little work, on the contrary, takes cognizance of thoſe animals, noxious to the community, de-

ſcribes their wonderful wilineſs and ſagacity, and the uncommon and ſurprizing methods they take for ſelf-preſervation and getting their prey; the reſearch may perhaps give the reader great ſatisfaction, for the infinite wiſdom of the great Creator is as conſpicuous in a mole as in a camel, in an ant as in a lion.

And as moſt noblemen, gentlemen, and others, who have country ſeats are generally, if not conſtantly, troubled with various kinds of vermin, greatly detrimental and deſtructive to their property in the following inſtances, viz. in many places where gentlemen have hare-warrens and pheaſantries, they are troubled with foxes, their waters with otters, thoſe great deſtroyers of

of fiſh; their poultry are killed by polecats, ſtoats, and weaſels; in other places the farmers are peſtered with wild cats, who originally ſtrayed from the farm and other lone houſes, and running into the woods breed in great numbers and do incredible miſchief, in deſtroying the game, poultry, rabbits, and young leverets; in many other places they are troubled with ſheep-killing dogs, who in the night time worry and kill great numbers of ſheep, ſo uſeful and neceſſary to the commonwealth, and the ſtaple commodity of the kingdom. But of all the noxious animals none do more miſchief than rats; both the old Engliſh black rat and the Norway rat, eſpecially the latter, which is the moſt miſchievous animal in the creation. In

all

all the above caſes, rules not drawn from theory, but from twenty years ſtrict obſervation and practice are laid down in the plaineſt manner, to find out their haunts and hiding places, with the eaſieſt methods how to take and deſtroy them; to the great joy and emolument of the perſons who have been injured and peſtered with them. Rules for taking and deſtroying moles and mice, are likewiſe given, and the nature of ferrets is alſo deſcribed, with inſtructions when it is proper to make uſe of them, and when not.

And as the noxious part of the creation is not confined to the earth only, many of the winged inhabitants of the air are equally pernicious to the gentleman

tleman and the farmer, their natures are deſcribed with proper and ſuitable directions how to take and deſtroy them, from the buzzard and kite, to the ſmalleſt bird of prey, without which the author would have eſtimated his work as incomplete.

On the whole, if the following little Treatiſe, ſhould any ways anſwer the intent for which it was written, the author will obtain the end he aimed at, and gratify the utmoſt extent of his ambition and wiſhes, namely, the good and advantage of his fellow ſubjects, and the general good of the community.

THE

THE

FOX.

I SHALL firſt begin with old Reynard the Fox, for he is the king of the vermin in this iſland, wolves indeed formerly abounded here, an animal infinitely more fierce and dangerous than the former, but theſe for many ages have been entirely extirpated.

THE Fox is a very ſubtle, ſly, and daring animal, and in hard and ſevere winters will come to places where hares

hares and pheaſants are kept, and deſtroy a great many of them; he is likewiſe a mortal enemy to lambs and all kinds of poultry, but ſcarce in any other inſtances he is more miſchievous than in deſtroying rabbets in warrens, which he frequently does in prodigious numbers, but more eſpecially in ſtopping time as I have known the young rabbits of near twenty ſtops taken away by the Foxes in one night's time. It may be neceſſary here to explain what is meant by the above term; when the female rabbit is ready to kindle, ſhe digs an hole or angle about four feet long, and about ten or twelve inches under ground, and when ſhe goes out for food, ſhe ſcratches the earth over the mouth of the hole, or ſtop ſo that it is ſcarcely perceptible to

the

the eye in order for the preſervation of her young ones from any approaching enemy; in the night the Fox being in ſearch of his prey, comes to the place where theſe ſtops are made and ſcents the young rabbits, but inſtead of entering therein he follows the ſcent above ground till he comes to the end of the angle, and then ſcratching up the earth comes immediately upon the young, which he devours; and this is called *crowning* on them.

It is very difficult to guard againſt the approaches of this enemy, his motions being ſo uncertain, unleſs a trap was conſtantly placed, for ſometimes he will deſtroy ſeveral lambs and poultry in the night at farm-houſes, and

not come near the ſame place again for a conſiderable time, ſhifting his quarters to other places conſiderably remote in ſearch of freſh plunder; but in large parks where hares and pheaſants are conſtantly kept in great numbers, there is a greater probability of taking him in the following manner:

THE method to know where and which way he comes is to make what is termed a ſhrape, which is done by drawing a circle * on the ground in the park or warren about three feet diameter, take the mould out all over four inches deep, then take a ſieve and ſift a ſufficient quantity of fine mould to fill it up again even to the ſurface, dig ſix of theſe in various parts of the park

* See letter A. plate 1. fig. 1.

and

Two
STEEL TRAPS
Fixed in a Shrape for a
FOX.

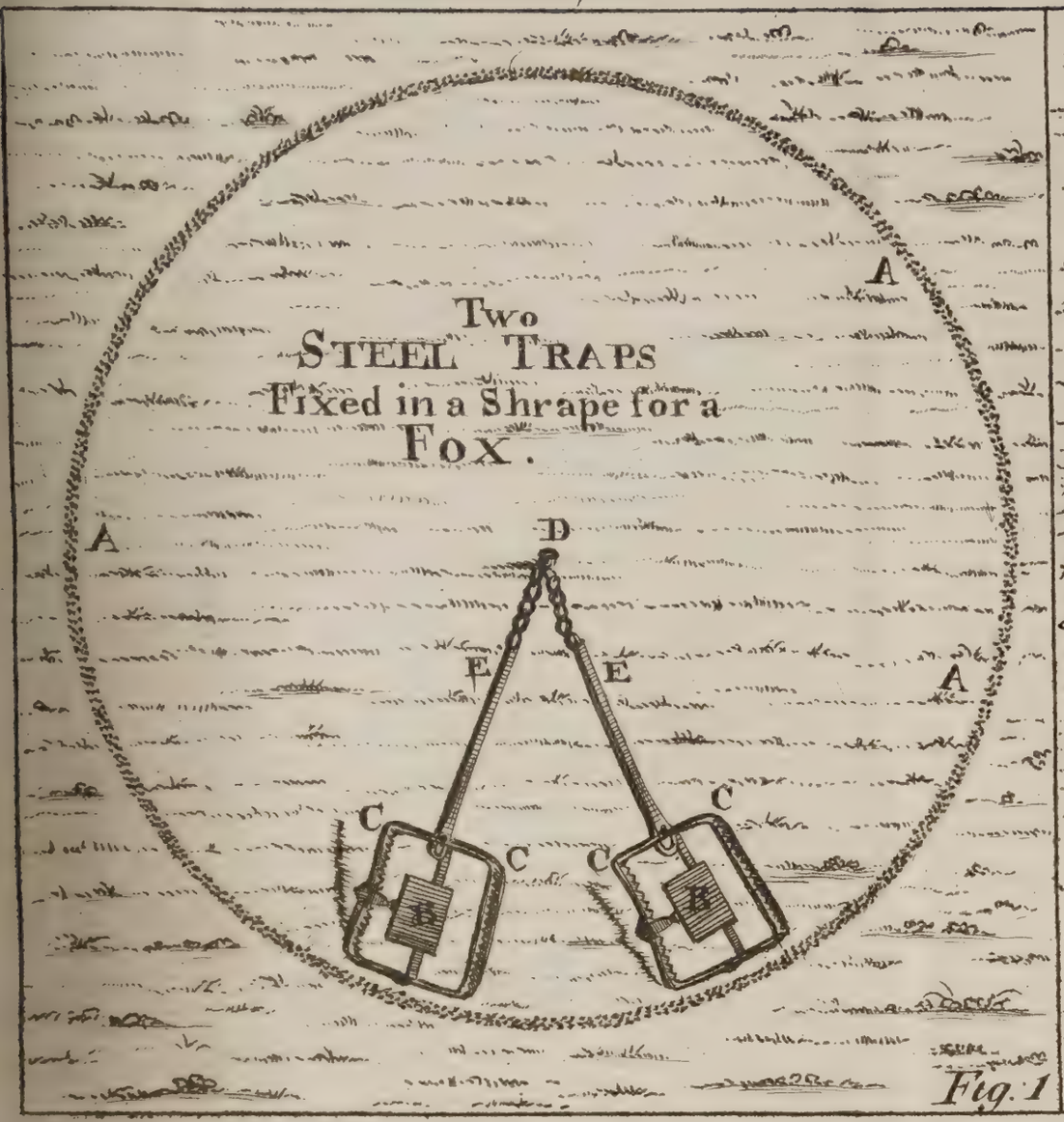


Fig. 1

The STEEL TRAP
set in a CUBE for a
FOX.

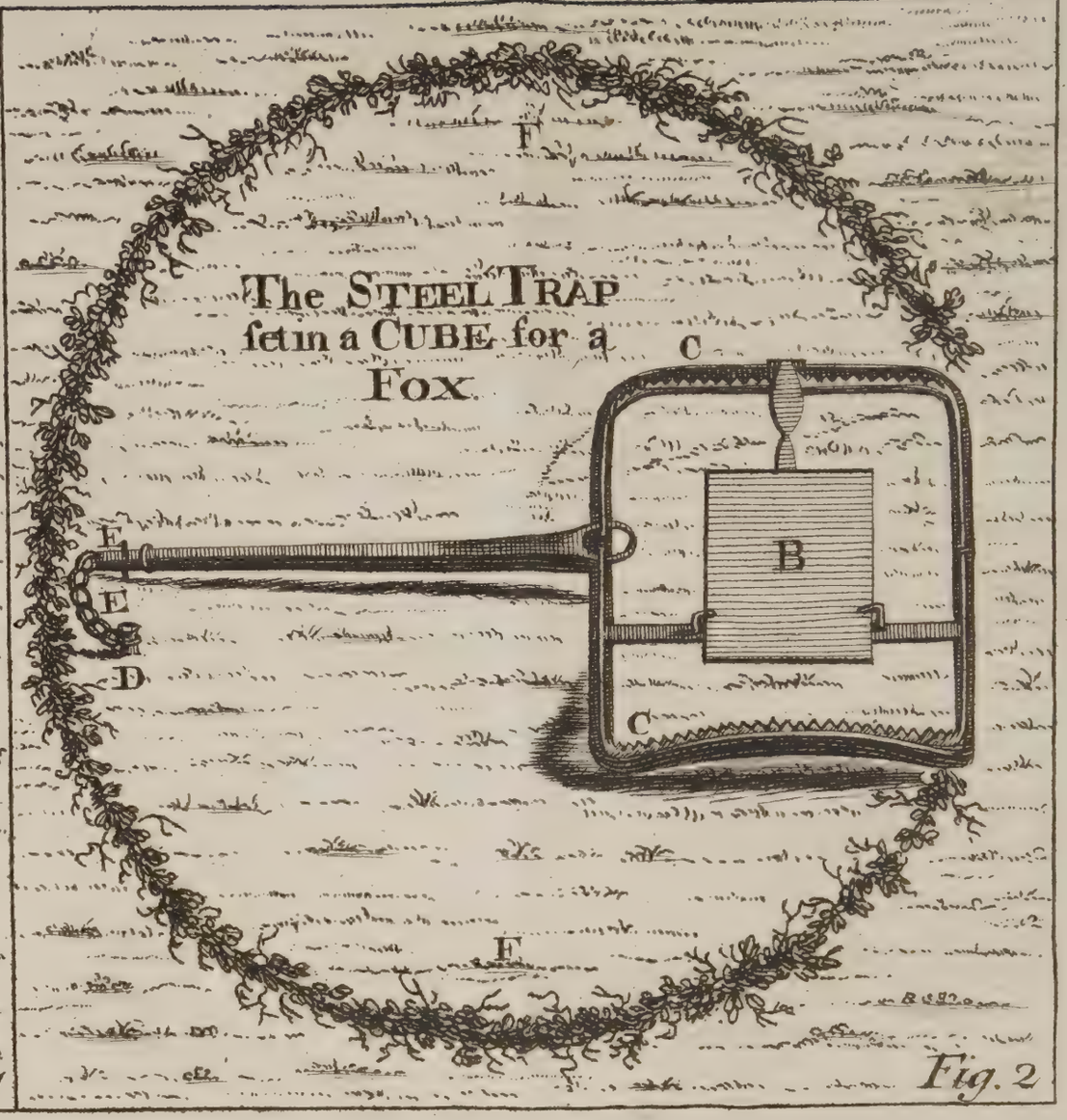


Fig. 2

and fill them up in the ſame manner. The reaſon of having the mould ſifted ſo fine is, that when you ſet a trap there will be no ſtones to intervene between the ſpring and the jaw of the trap, which will ſometimes happen without proper obſervance, and prevent the trap from ſtriking cloſe.

The next ſtep to be taken is to procure a ſheep's paunch; tie a ſtring to it, and draw it to each ſhrape, before deſcribed, but remember at the diſtance of two or three hundred yards to rub the bottom of your ſhoes on the paunch, which will prevent him from diſcovering the ſmell of your feet, and at every ſhrape lay ſome pieces of ſtrong old Cheſhire cheeſe and come again in the morning,

when you will plainly perceive, whether his behaviour is ſhy or not; for he will ſometimes eat all the cheeſe he can reach without entering on the ſhrape; the next night he will venture ſomewhat further, and ſet his feet ſo lightly on the mould that you can ſcarcely diſcern the print of his feet: I have ſometimes fed a ſhy Fox for a whole week before I have ſet a trap for him, but when he comes to feed boldly he will trample all over the ſhrape and make prints an inch deep, and in that ſhrape, where he ſeems to feed the freeſt, I would adviſe to place two traps and without any particular accident, if he comes, you will be ſure of catching him.

SET your traps after the following manner, take ſome mould out juſt ſufficient for the traps to lie in; and when properly placed, get ſome moſs, and with a ſmall ſtick put ſome of it under the bridge, and likewiſe between the bridge and the jaw, and lay it quite ſmooth; now the reaſon of having the above ſtick is, that in caſe you ſhould ſpring the trap, it will not injure you in the leaſt, but only catches the end of the ſtick. The next particular you muſt obſerve is, to procure a thin piece of board, a foot in length, two inches wide at one end, and cut away at the other to hold by; then with this board ſtrike ſome mould or earth over the trap entirely level with the other part of the ſhrape; this board is abſolutely neceſſary in

order to prevent your handling the mould, for if he is in the leaſt ſhy, he will not approach the ſhrape if you once handle it; another caution is likewiſe neceſſary, which is not to let the bridges of your traps be too wide, for a Fox had better come and put his foot in between the bridge and the jaw of the trap and not ſpring it at all, for in that caſe he will come again, as he has not been balked, but when the bridge is too wide, if he happens to ſet his foot on the jaw, then his toe nails reach the bridge and ſpring the trap without catching him, which will render him ſhy and it will be a very difficult matter afterwards to get him at all.

But in order to prevent any ſuch diſappointment, I would adviſe that your

your ſteel traps for the Fox ſhould be ſquare in the jaw, and not round as the common traps are uſually made, and ſtrike but five inches high and ſeven inches long in the jaw with ſaw-teeth *, and let the tail † of the trap be two feet from the tail-end ‡ of the ſpring, for they are generally made too ſhort, from whence this inconvenience ariſes, that when a trap ſtands ſet for ſome time in warrens or parks, the ſpring gives out, the purchaſe being ſo quick, whereas, were the traps formed on the principle above laid down, the ſpring would remain for a conſiderable time without giving way, and laſtly, let the § bridge of the trap be four inches ſquare.

* See the letters C C in plate 1. fig. 1.
† See D in the ſame plate.
‡ See E in the ſame plate.
§ See B in the ſame plate.

But as to a ſhy Fox, as juſt above obſerved, I have known them come again, when compelled by hunger and neceſſity, and ſometimes even with three legs, and take the young rabbits out of the ſtops or holes as before deſcribed.

And here I beg leave to correct a vulgar error mentioned by ſome authors, which is that the Fox, when caught by the leg in a trap, in order to facilitate his eſcape, will gnaw off the ſame above the jaws of the trap, but this aſſertion is entirely falſe and erroneous, as it would put the animal to inconceivable pain and agony to bite its own fleſh while any ſenſation remained and renders the ſuppoſition likewiſe unnatural, but the real

ſtate

ſtate of the caſe is this, which I have proved from long experience, for as a dog when he has got into a trap will yelp and cry out till he is tired, which ſoon happens, and then lie quiet, on the contrary this artful cunning creature, we are now deſcribing, as ſoon as taken, makes no noiſe at all, but is indefatigable in his endeavours to get out, and will neither ſtand nor lie ſtill till either ſomebody comes to let him out, or he gets out by the following manner: he immediately begins to tumble and toſs about, and after ſome time ſtriving, he breaks his leg juſt at the place where the iron jaws of the trap are faſtened; the lower part of the leg under the trap is ſoon benumbed and deprived of all ſenſation, which the Fox then gnaws off, and drawing the

the ſinews through the teeth of the trap, makes his eſcape, leaving that part of his leg, which he had bit off, behind him, and, as a further confirmation, I once catched a dog and bitch Fox early in the winter, which both eſcaped by the above means, with three legs each, and the enſuing ſpring came to the ſame warren and took out ſeveral ſtops on their three legs, which I diſcovered, and poiſoned them by means of ſome balls properly prepared, the method of which I ſhall ſoon come to deſcribe.

It may not here be unneceſſary to lay down ſome rules to diſtinguiſh the dog Fox from the bitch, which may eaſiy be done, without ſeeing them, by adhering to the following obſervations:

tions: a dog Fox has a larger foot than a bitch, and it much reſembles that of a ſmall lurcher dog, and has been often miſtaken for one, by thoſe who do not examine things minutely: but there is an eſſential difference; for the Fox has hardly any ball to the heel of his foot, but the dog has a large one; and a bitch Fox has likewiſe a ſmall foot with the ball thereof ſtill conſiderably leſs than the male. The utility of this remark will ſoon appear.

I NOW proceed to lay down another method of taking and deſtroying theſe pernicious vermin, either in park, warren, or field, but more eſpecially thoſe, who have been made ſhy, or have loſt a leg in a trap as before hinted, which

is as follows: whatever place it may happen to be in, you muſt take notice of all the little bye-paths all round the ground, and ſift ſome mould in each of them, and place by the ſide of each path, where the mould is ſifted, a piece of white rag, ſtuck upon a ſtick; for if there be any rabbits or hares near the path, they by running up and down will create ſuch confuſion in the mould, that it will be next to an impoſſibility to diſtinguiſh the impreſſion of the Fox's foot; the intent therefore of theſe white rags is to fright the rabbits and hares away, but the Fox will boldly proceed along regardleſs of them: as ſoon therefore as you have diſcovered which path he came along, you muſt not trail for him as before, for that having ſeduced him into danger

ger and led him to the trap, he will remember it well, and it is a very great chance whether he will follow the trail at all. But take two good figs of nux vomica; let them be quite white and ſound, (for thoſe that are of a brown colour are neither ſo ſtrong nor efficacious) then raſp them very fine, take a piece of good dripping as big as a tennis ball, mix with theſe a little flower to bring it to a proper conſiſtency or ſtiffneſs, and then roll it in honey; for there is nothing fonder of honey than a Fox, and I have ſeen one ſcratch up the earth for a bees neſt under the ground for the ſake of the honey, and after he had accompliſhed his deſign, having the wind of him I ſhot him dead on the ſpot. But to return:

When you have found out the path he comes in, place two or three of theſe balls of the magnitude before mentioned at nine or ten yards diſtance, for fear he ſhould miſs one; ſtick them on a ſmall ſtick ſix inches high, in order to prevent the mice from eating them. But a little diſtinction is here neceſſary to be made, for if you are endeavouring after a Fox, whom you imagine never to have been made ſhy or caught in a trap, the method of trailing, as laid down in the firſt inſtance may be followed, and then one ball will be ſufficient to be put in the path, which he will readily go up to and take, and in order ſtill to be more certain of his footſteps, take the foot of a Fox and print it in fine mould or ſand, but the former is better if it

can

can be got, the latter when dry, being apt to run; by obſerving this rule you will readily know the print of his foot, wherever you ſee it.

When the plan has ſucceeded to your wiſhes, and the Fox has taken one of the balls as he came in, it is ten to one but he dies before he gets out again, as was the caſe with the dog and bitch Fox before mentioned, and if you print him in and not print him out, then you may hunt for him with your dog, being certain that he is ſtill lurking ſomewhere in the ground.

In ſome places where traps have not been ſet for them they may be catched as eaſy as a dog, I have taken

them in a cube, where a trap for a dog has been ſet, the cube is formed in the manner as repreſented in [pl. 1. fig. 2. F.] by the cut therein annexed, and may be made in the center where two paths croſs, or in a warren, or park, or at any gate or ſtile where he comes in: if you do not find that he comes in at any of the above places over your ſhrapes, you muſt as you go round the ſides of the path, gates and ſtiles, mind whether you don't ſee his billots, that is his dung, the term being to ſay after he has dunged that he has billoted; if you ſhould not rightly know it, take up what you imagine to be the ſame, and break it and you will find it full of large black beetles, ſometimes you may ſmell him, then look about very nicely, and it is ten to one

but

but he has billoted ſomewhere near the place.

LET your cube be made after this manner, draw a circle, [pl. 1. fig. 2. F.] but in the front leave juſt room for the trap to go in when ſet, then bank it up all round from one ſide of the jaw of the trap quite round to the other; ſet your traps in the ſame manner as you ſee in the plan of it, but be ſure, to moſs them as before directed, for the moſs preſerves the fine mould from running under the bridge, and at the ſame time keeps it up hollow that it may ſtrike freely and properly, but when the mould runs in, it ſets the trap ſo hard that it is impoſſible for it to ſtrike at all. If you are in a warren, put ſome rabbits guts in the back part of the cube, if theſe cannot be

procured, place ſome pieces of ſtrong rotten Cheſhire cheeſe, which they are very greedy of; if at a farm get ſome bits of dead fowls if poſſible, and if in a field, it is probable you may find ſome of the mangled carcaſſes of lambs, which they have killed and hid pieces of them in the ground, which they often do: but remermber in all theſe particular caſes to put the bait in the back part of the cube as before hinted; and whenever you ſet a trap for a Fox let it be placed early in the afternoon, in order that the foil you make may go off before he comes, and when you have ſet them, cover them with a buſh cut on purpoſe to keep any thing elſe from ſtriking it, till you come round at night and uncover it again.

In many country places there are people, who make it their buſineſs to take Foxes out of their earths for gentlemen to hunt them at their pleaſure; theſe are properly called bag-foxes. I have known in ſome ſtoney countries that they ſet ſtone traps for them at their earths, ſo that it is impoſſible for them to get out without being taken, but of this method of catching them I cannot ſpeak from my own experience, having been only a ſpectator of the traps, and of conſequence cannot be ſo able to judge of it as where I have been the principal actor myſelf, I mention this to teſtify that I would not even in the moſt minute circumſtances impoſe on my readers.

I HAVE

I HAVE practiſed likewiſe the following method with good ſucceſs, which may be imitated with great facility; let the party employed go round and carefully ſearch for their earthing places wherever they are, and make the mouths of them quite fine with mould; then come again the next morning and obſerve whether the earth has been trampled on, and if you ſee the prints of his feet tending outward and inward, you may then be aſſured that he is ſafe within his hole or earth, on which take a good ſtrong hay-net, ſuch as are uſed in ſome warrens, pitched all around at a proper diſtance, put the ſticks quite ſlight into the ground, that as ſoon as he ſtrikes the net, it may fall upon and entangle him, but if you place it tight

he

he will tumble over, and by that means eſcape. Another caution is neceſſary, when you have ſet your net you muſt put ſome bells in three or four different places, that you may hear when he ſtrikes the net; then run in upon him and keep him entangled, otherwiſe he will get out again, and ſeizing him by the pole or back part of his neck, muzzle him and tye his fore legs together that he may not ſcratch his muzzle off again; I have known a Fox, earthed as above, watched for two or three nights together till he has been ſtarved out before they could catch him.

Sometimes when a Fox is found in the earth, or is hunted in, the method is to dig him out immediately after

after the following manner; take a good tarrier, that is kept for that purpoſe, one that will lie at a Fox, then you muſt liſten and ſound him as the warreners do their line ferrets; dig a trench croſs the angle, and when you have got to the angle, perhaps he will fly back, as they frequently do; then ſink another trench near him, and when you have dug down to him take care he don't bite you, as he is a fierce animal when drove to deſperation and bites very hard; in the next place take your dog back, that you may get him out, this is what we call drawing him as follows; take an old hat, or any thing of a ſimilar nature in your hand, and dodge it before him when he will catch hold of it immediately, then with the other hand catch him by the back

back part of the poll with all poſſible quickneſs, as the motion muſt be as it were inſtantaneous; and this ſame method muſt be obſerved when you have one in a trap, if you have a mind to take him alive, and always remember to have a muzzle ready to put on him directly, and put him into a ſack, and then you may do what you pleaſe with him afterwards; what I mean by a muzzle is this, take a bit of ſtrong tape, put it over his noſe, bring both ends under his jaw, and tie them tight together; then bring it along under his throat an inch and half from the firſt knot, then tie them both together in one knot again, then bring the two ends up behind his ears and tie them tight, and this is what I call a muzzle

in

in the ſame manner as warreners muzzle their dogs to drive to the nets.

HAVING proceeded thus far in my deſcription, &c. of this remarkable animal, I conclude what I have to ſay of him with the following recipe, to take a ſhy dog Fox, which I have known to ſucceed, when all other means have proved ineffectual, and likewiſe with another obſervation neither of which are generally known.

THE trail for him is, when you have taken a bitch Fox, that goes a clicketing, take and cut that veſſel, which contains her ſperm, the ſame as the ſow-gelders deprive bitches of when they ſpay them, mixing with this ſome gum maſtic and put them as ſoon as

as poſſible, after being taken from the animal, into an earthen pot, keeping it quite cloſe, and it will remain ſerviceable a whole year, and when occaſion offers, take a large piece of the rind of bacon, broil it well on a gridiron and then dip it in the pot, uſing it as a trail, in the ſame manner as the ſheep's paunch before deſcribed.

The laſt remark I ſhall make is, that there is one ſeaſon in the year when a Fox will not run after a trail at all, at leaſt very rarely, and that is in the ſpring, when he gets plenty of young rabbits and leverets; for he is then dainty; when this is the caſe, another method muſt be taken: at this time of the year the bitch Fox goes what is called *a-clicketing*, you muſt mind

which way he comes, which may be done by ſifting ſome fine mould in all the little bye paths, and when you have diſcovered the right one, place two ſteel traps about twenty yards diſtance from each other for fear he ſhould miſs one, but lay no bait for him, and if he comes there is the greateſt probability of his being caught; I have often been forced to act in this manner and have ſucceeded.

THE

THE OTTER.

THE Otter is an amphibious animal which preys both by land and water, for when he is disturbed in the water he preys by land: as a proof of which, I once catched a dog Otter in a warren where he came to prey on the rabbits, after the old bitch Otter and all the young cubs had been killed down at the river not far from the warren.

THE Otter generally frequents rivers and brooks in order to search for his prey, and will often come to fish-

ponds likewiſe, deſtroying the fiſh, and yet not lie there; the method to diſcover his haunts is very eaſy, for, in whatever place he preys, you will be certain to find the tails or hinder parts of the fiſh left undevoured at the ſides of the ponds, &c. for it is obſervable that he eats the head and body of the fiſh as far as the vent and very ſeldom any farther; look all round the pond and by his marks or footſteps you will find where he enters the pond, and likewiſe where he comes out to eat the fiſh by the ſide, for no amphibious animal devours his prey in the water, or can remain a ſingle moment under it longer than he can hold his breath. When you have diſcovered the place, it will be adviſeable to put a good ſtrong ſteel trap in the water down

down in the mud; put the mud over the bridge of the trap as much as you can that he may not diſcover the trap. I have catched ſeveral this way. If you ſhould not happen to find where he takes the water, you will ſee where he ſits to eat his fiſh, and then you muſt ſet a trap or two by the ſide of the water, in different places where you find the bits of fiſh; cut a hole in the ground to let them in juſt fluſh or even with the ground, then cover them over with moſs very nicely: but in my opinion there is no neceſſity to bait them, for the Otter will ſeldom, I believe never, touch any thing but what he kills himſelf. I may poſſibly be miſtaken in this point, but after many repeated trials never could get him to touch any bait I ſet for him.

THE Otter in rivers and brooks has a kennel, which with proper notice as before given, you will find; the ſtructure of it is very ingenious and admirable, indeed not equal to that of the beaver, though in ſome inſtances of a ſimilar conſtruction, for they always have two ways to go in and out at, one by land and the other by water, for ſuch is the cunningneſs and ſagacity of theſe vermin towards their preſervation, that if diſturbed by land, they can vent or eſcape by water, and if attacked by water they can eſcape by land; now when you have found out theſe kennels, and diſcern that they uſe and frequent it, look carefully about and you will ſee ſome of his landing places, where he ſits and eats his prey, and before the ſpot where he lands,

lands, there put a trap down in the water as already directed in the ponds, where I have caught them, and likewiſe deſtroyed all the young ones in the kennel, but know no bait in particular they are fond of, as before obſerved; tho' others may be of a contrary opinion.

In many places where I have been, ſmall hounds have been employed in deſtroying theſe vermin, called Otter hounds; when one is unkennelled, he immediately goes to the bottom of the water, where he remains as long as his breath will hold out, which is a conſiderable time; he then goes under the bank, or under ſome reeds or boughs, there he draws breath and blubbers the water; the term, when he is perceived

ceived by any of his purſuers, is to ſay, There he vents; and they ſtrike at him with a ſpear made for that purpoſe, and often kill him, but if the ſpear miſſes, he ſets off again and the dogs follow, and if good, ſeldom miſs of killing him.

The above animal is not footed like other vermin, for they have a web between each claw, like many water fowls, which greatly accelerates their motion in ſwimming when purſued by the dogs; they have no heel, but a round ball under the ſole of the foot, the track of which is called their mark, and their dung is called their ſprents.

THE

BADGER.

HE is a grey hard haired animal, a good deal of the pig kind; and is not near ſo hurtful as many other animals of the vermin-kind; for the chief miſchief he does conſiſts in ſcratching of earths, or holes, which afterwards ſerve for earths for the foxes to harbour in, and in ſcratching and grubbing up the ground in ſearching after his food, ſuch as pignuts and roots, on which, and on beach-maſt, acorns, crabs, and other traſh, he ſubſiſts, but does not prey on any living thing of any kind, as has been aſſert-

ed

ed by ſome authors, who have falſly affirmed that he deſtroys and lives on young lambs, pigs, and poultry; and in conſequence of the ſimplicity of his food, I have known in ſome places people will eat them, being generally very fat and their fleſh exceedingly ſweet.

I HAVE practiſed two methods of taking the Badger with great ſucceſs, the firſt of which is, when you have found out one of their earths let two perſons go out in the night, while they are in ſearch of their food, and put a thin ſack into the hole, and faſten it at the mouth that the Badger may not run away with it; then let one perſon remain near the hole, while the other beats round the fields with a dog in order

order to drive him home, when he finds the dog after him he runs to his hole as faſt as poſſible, and goes into the ſack, which ſlips cloſe like a purſe; the party who ſtayed near the hole, on hearing his approach, lays hold of the mouth of the ſack and pulls out the Badger in it, and this method is termed, Sacking the Badger. Another way is to place a ſteel trap in which you will catch him very eaſily, as he is nothing near ſo ſhy as the Fox; when you come to his earths, or holes, make the mouths of all the angles quite ſmooth, and come again the next morning, when you will ſee whether any have been in or gone out, and if you track him in and out, then put a trap in each earth in the ſame manner as you did for the fox, and you need not fear

fear catching him: but remember to ſtake down your trap, that he may not go away with it.

THE

THE

SHEEP-KILLING DOG.

THIS animal is extremely pernicious and detrimental wherever he exiſts, for when once a Dog takes to killing ſheep, he ſeldom or never leaves the practice off, in which he is extremely ſhy, and it is a very difficult matter to put a ſtop to his proceedings till you can diſcover his owner, which is no eaſy taſk, for if once he perceives you are tracking him home, he will go two or three miles another way.

IF it happens that he ſhould come in the night and deſtroy any of your

lambs or ſheep, the circumſtance becomes very alarming, and the farmer generally moves his ſheep into another field or place, this certainly will balk him for ſome ſmall time, till he finds them again and then the conſequence is as bad as ever; I would therefore adviſe not to move your flocks at all, for the following reaſon, that by this means you may the ſooner be enabled to deſtroy him. To this end, go early in the morning into the field where the ſheep are, which is always cuſtomary every morning among the farmers, then you will find whether he has been amongſt and killed any of them: if you perceive this to be the caſe, inſpect carefully all round the field whether you can track, or ſee the print of his feet at any gate, ſtile, or gap, if

there

there be one, if you look carefully it is ten to one but you trace his footſteps; this being done, you may prepare for him againſt night in the following manner: get two good ſteel traps, ſet one of them by the ſide of the gate, ſtile, or gap, where you imagine he enters, within ſide of the field, in the ſame manner as before directed for the fox in a cube trap, and cover the ſame, but do not handle the mould; then take the liver of the ſheep or lamb he has devoured, cut them into ſlices, and fry them in ſome good dripping and put them on the back part of the cube; then take a piece of the fleſh of the ſheep or lamb and rub it all about the gate or ſtile, &c. in order that he may be allured by the ſcent, then ſet another trap in the ſame manner as the

other at another gate, for fear he ſhould not come in the ſame way again: a farmer is ſometimes at a loſs for theſe traps, but if he lives adjacent to any warren, he may eaſily borrow two of the true ſort, but for fear of an accident it would not be amiſs for the farmer to have them always by him. The above directions being put into execution, get a ſheep's paunch and draw a trail all round the field, as you do for the fox, and draw it up cloſe to the mouth of each cube or trap, and by theſe means I have frequently catched ſeveral of them.

In ſome country places where they have none of the aforeſaid traps, people are at a loſs how to proceed, the ſubſequent method will ſupply their place

place in ſome meaſure, and be attended with ſucceſs; when you have diſcovered in the morning, that he has been among the ſheep the over-night, get ſome good dripping, as big as a tennis ball, raſp two good figs of nux vomica and mix them together ſtiffened with a little flour; make ſeveral of theſe balls, and at evening trail a ſheep's paunch tied with a ſtring to each gate, ſtile, or gap, where you imagine he enters, placing one of theſe balls at every place, ſtuck on the top of a ſmall piece of ſtick about ſix inches high, with the other end in the ground, which will prevent the mice from eating it, when you have trailed to one place, there ſtick the ball, trailing on to the next in like manner till you have gone quite round the field; let this be

done juſt at dark, and go again in the morning, and obſerve how many balls are gone, the remaining ones take up and put them down again at night, and ſo proceed till you find he has ſwallowed ſome of them, of which there is no fear, if he chances to come.

I HAVE ſometimes been greatly embaraſſed in catching him, tho' I have fully diſcovered the place at which he came into the field to deſtroy the ſheep; for he was ſo extremely ſhy that he would not follow the trail, nor touch any bait laid for him. I then took the following method, viz. juſt at the gate where he came in, I procured two radded hurdles and put them cloſe at one end, top and bottom; and at the extremity of the end ſo cloſed, I tied a live

a live lamb, and at the other end where the opening was, I ſet two ſteel traps cloſe by each other, and in the room they did not fill up, I placed a large buſh to ſupply the vacancy. Theſe traps were covered very nicely, in the ſame manner as for the fox; the plan ſucceeded and the arch thief was happily taken. If it ſhould be a Dog that comes, procure ſome of the urine of a proud bitch, and rub it about the trail, or the bait, which will infallibly bring him on, let him be ever ſo ſhy, and induce him to go boldly up to the trap and be caught.

THE

THE

HOUSE CAT,

TURNED WILD.

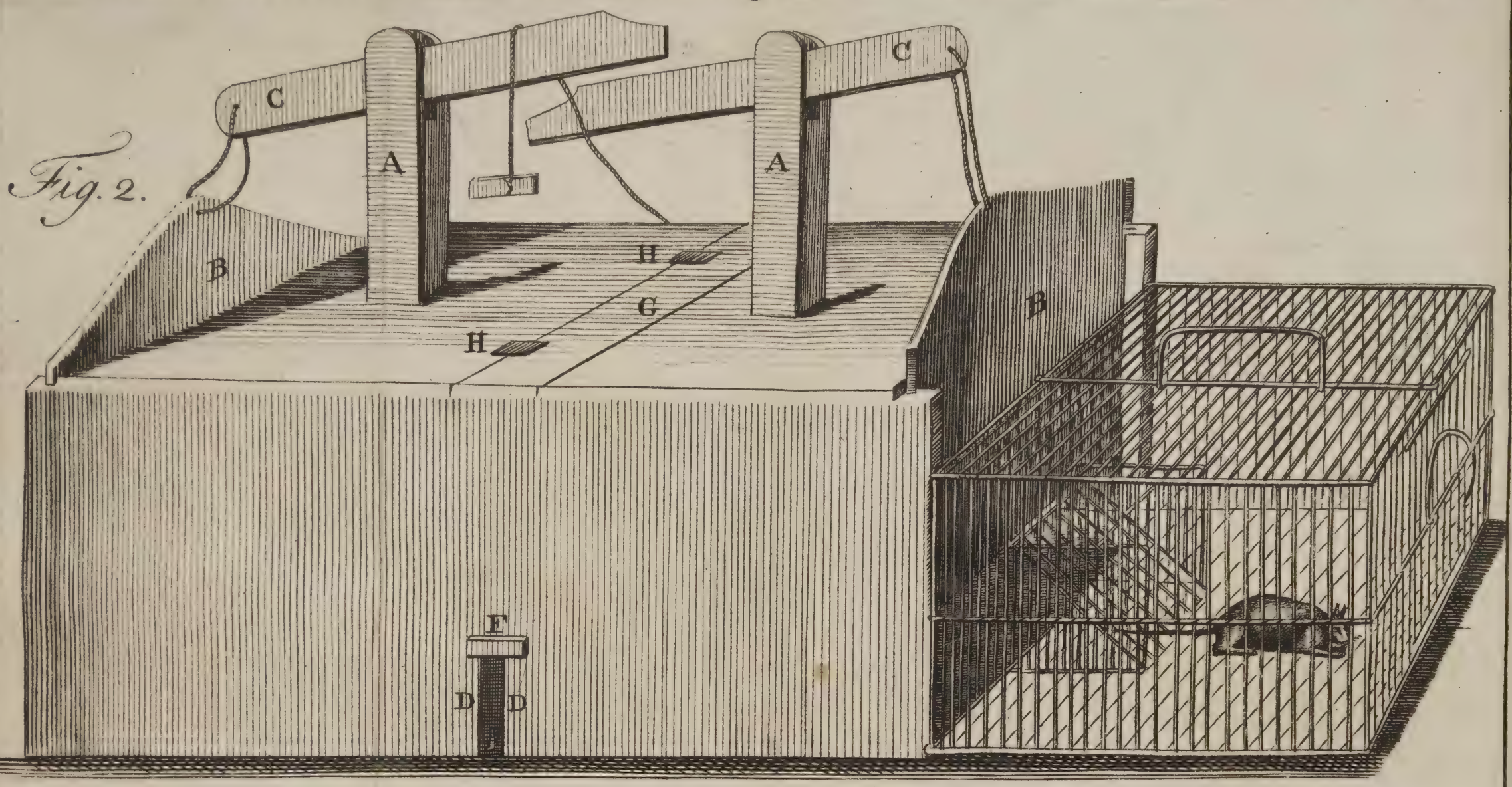
THIS domeſtic animal is ſo well known as to need no deſcription here, and is very uſeful in a family, but frequently they will run wild in woods, parks, chaces, or foreſts, and do infinitely more miſchief than many vermin naturally wild, and become entirely the reverſe of what they were originally intended for.

THEY attack their prey with ſurprizing ferocity, equal to that of a tiger,

ger, and are very hurtful in gentlemen's grounds, ſuch as wood-walks, pheaſantries, chicken-grounds, or places where poultry is kept; where they deſtroy the young pheaſants, chickens, ducks, rabbits, and leverets. I have killed ſeven of theſe Cats in one week, in a gentleman's chicken-ground, where they came and deſtroyed almoſt all his Chineſe and other pheaſants, Bantam and Guinea fowls, and other curious poultry, both domeſtic and of foreign extraction, alſo his tame rabbits; on all which he ſet the greateſt value. I have caught divers of them in a warren, who have rambled ſeveral miles to come for their prey, for there is a kind of theſe creatures, beſides thoſe that live in the woods, which generally reſide about farm-

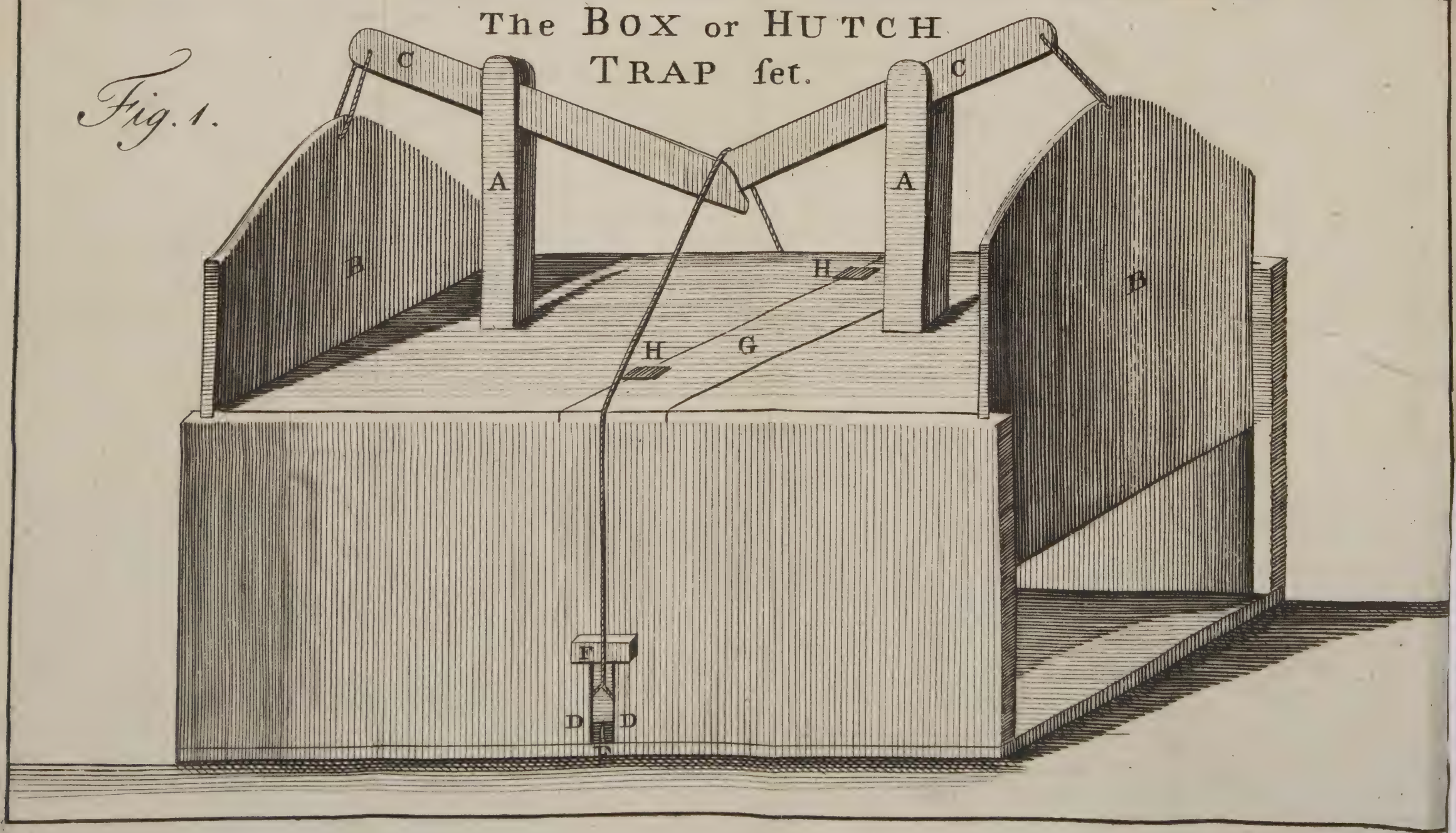
The BOX or HUTCH TRAP ſtruck ſhewing also the CAGE for taking out the VERMIN.

Fig. 2.



The BOX or HUTCH TRAP ſet.

Fig. 1.



farm-houſes, and at night go out to prowl, and are of no ſervice to the owner. As a proof of this, a farmer happening to come to the warren, who lived about three miles diſtant, owned one of the cats killed that morning, which had left his houſe the preceding evening. I have caught thirty wild Cats in a ſeaſon at the ſame warren, and we had but two houſes near us, upwards of a mile diſtant each way, by which it appears how far theſe animals will ramble, in ſearch of their prey.

I NOW proceed to the manner of taking them; when you find they come to any of the fore-mentioned places, get a common box trap, or hutch trap, [pl. II. fig. 1.] ſuch as are uſed

uſed in warrens; let it be nine inches wide, full ten inches high in the clear, and three feet long. Let the ſtandards A. A. be placed in the centre on the top of the trap, ten inches from each end B. B. which muſt ſlide up and down in a groove; let the ſtandards be twelve inches high, with a notch cut in each two inches deep, and three quarters of an inch wide, that the ſwords C. C. may have free room to play by the ſide of each other. Let the bridge be eight inches ſquare, and then there will be a clear inch in length for the bridge to play; then get a piece of wood, half an inch thick, and an inch and half ſquare, make a hole in the middle, and place it at the bottom of the trap, up againſt the back in the centre, afterwards put a nail

nail through without a head, and nail it down to the bottom of the trap, the nail ſtanding up half an inch, then there will be room for the bridge to hang on: make a hole at one end of the bridge in the centre, and place it on the nail; in the other end put a ſtrong piece of wire, and cut a trigger hole in the front of the trap towards the bottom exactly in the middle, three inches high, and half an inch wide, D. D. and be careful to have the inſide of the trigger or tiller hole lined on each ſide the edges with narrow pieces of tin, which will prevent its being gnawed, and the trap from being defaced; for all vermin, whether cats, rats, &c. will conſtantly gnaw and ſcratch wherever they ſee light; then let the wire E. at the ſide of the

bridge go thro' the trigger hole D. D. a ſmall matter turned up at the end, that it may hitch to the tiller, which is the ſmall piece of wood tied to the end of the ſtring, then fix a little bit of wood F, half an inch above the trigger hole, on the outſide of the trap, as a ſtop for the trigger. But ſome people are apt to put the tiller in the hole, where it often hangs and prevents the trap from ſtriking, whereas if placed as directed, it cannot hang in the leaſt, but muſt ſtrike and take the enemy; whom in order to ſecure, when taken, let a piece of wood about half an inch high be nailed to the bottom of the trap on the inſide, cloſe to where the door falls at each end; this will hinder any light from coming in, and prevent the vermin from ſcratching

ing the door up again and eſcaping, as I have known it ſometimes done.

The next ſtep in the formation of the trap, is to take out a bit of the wood from the centre of the top-board G, ſix inches wide, cut ſlanting on one ſide and directly or ſtrait down on the other with a ſmall tenant ſaw, which will waſte but little of the board, and may readily be taken in and out, over the bridge, and is convenient to put the bait in. Fix a ſmall piece of wood under the lid the whole length, excepting the thickneſs of the ſides, to keep it from ſliding in or out, and on the even ſide of the lid put two ſmall wooden haſps, H. H. which will keep it faſt on that ſide, and that ſide cut under or aſlant holds faſt likewiſe;

then in the back part of the trap in the centre, above the bridge, drive a nail through, and turn it up with a hook to hang the bait on. I have now deſcribed the trap to catch this dangerous enemy, with the greateſt minuteneſs, but for the reader's better underſtanding the nature and meaning of the ſame, I have annexed a beautiful copper-plate, containing an exact view or repreſentation of it, with references anſwering to the foregoing explanation.

This being done, take ſome valerian powder, and ſcatter it in and about the trap; for they are fond of the ſmell of valerian-root to a degree of extravagancy, rolling themſelves about when they come near it, purring, and

ſeem-

ſeeming to be as it were in an ecſtacy; if you have no valerian at hand, put ſome pieces of marem or cat-thyme into the trap, which they are likewiſe fond of. Now for your bait, take ſome fiſhes heads or bones, or a red herring, rubbing the end of the trap with the ſame, and hang it on the nail in the back part over the bridge: this they will eagerly catch at, it being an obſervation, that Cats love fiſh, but do not love to wet their feet: yet I have known an inſtance to the contrary, having obſerved one of theſe Cats take the water like a ſpaniel after the water-rats; but this is very rare and uncommon.

THE bait being placed, take ſeveral red herrings, tie them together in a

ſtring, and draw a trail all round where you think they come, and likewiſe to the traps; and if they approach you need not fear of catching them. If you find your trap down in the morning, one caution is neceſſary, which is not to lift up the door of the trap to diſcover what kind of animal you have taken, it being poſſible that ſome other vermin may have got in, for if it ſhould prove to be a wild Cat, the moment ſhe ſees light, ſhe will ſtrike at your face with her claws, and endanger your eye-ſight, and probably make her eſcape: having once been ſerved ſo myſelf, I would therefore recommend to take a thin ſack, draw the end thereof, to the end of the trap ſo far that it be in the ſack's mouth, which you muſt draw up tight, then

rattle

rattle the other end, and the Cat will bolt out into the ſack, and holding the mouth tight, gather it together and you may do what you pleaſe with it.

THE

THE

MARTEN CAT.

THIS is a very curious and beautiful animal, not commonly known, even by many connoiſſeurs in natural hiſtory, and is the largeſt of the ferret-kind; he ſeldom or never comes near any dwelling-houſes or farm-yards, but delights in ſolitarineſs, frequenting lone foreſts, chaces, woods, and other deſart places: however I knew one that uſed to run tame about the kitchen of the Bald-Face-Stag, on Epping-Foreſt; they have no ſtrong diſagreeable ſcent, like the pole-cat,

cat, weaſel and other ſtinking animals of a ſimilar nature, but are reckoned the ſweeteſt of the vermin-kind: I caught ſeveral one winter on the aforeſaid foreſt, and ſold their ſkins for four ſhillings and ſixpence each, for the ſake of the fur, which is exceedingly good.

THEIR lodging places are in old crows or magpies neſts, ſometimes in a woodpecker's hole and in hollow trees: I have traced them in the ſnow, and when they take to a tree they will go from one to another with incredible ſwiftneſs like a ſquirrel, till they ſettle themſelves in ſome or other of the places before mentioned, where you are likely to find them. They are very fond of birds of all kinds, particularly

larly the wood-pigeon, or ring-dove, and turtle-dove, which in the night time they take from their roofting places. Now when you have diſcovered by their tracks either in the earth or ſnow where they go, place a common box or hutch trap ſuch as they uſe in warrens [pl. II. fig. 1.] bait it with a bird, in the ſame manner as I before deſcribed for the wild cat, pick off ſome of the bird's feathers, and ſtrew them through the inſide of the trap from one end to the other, and hang the bird on a nail; this is the way I have caught ſeveral of them, but in ſome places I have known them hunted with hounds, when they are ſure to lead the dogs through the thickeſt covers they can find. They are not an animal that abounds in great numbers,

bers, but rather ſcarce to be found; I make this obſervation, becauſe many perſons are entirely ignorant of its exiſtence, for which reaſon I have been the more particular and exact in my account of this uncommon creature.

THE

POLECAT.

THIS animal is diſtinguiſhed by various appellations in different parts of the kingdom being in moſt parts called a Polecat, in ſome a Formet, and in others a Fitchet, and by one or other of the above three names he is known all over England.

He is a very ſubtle and pernicious creature, being a mortal enemy to fowls of all kinds, and doing prodigious miſchief in warrens, by deſtroying the young rabbits, for when once they take to a borough, conſiſting of a large number of holes or angles, they either kill or drive the rabbits away, who by

inſtinct ſhun ſo dangerous a foe: in the hen-houſes they are equally deſtructive, and when they have killed a fowl they drag it away, if they can get it through the hole they enter in at, but they have one good property, that is, that if they can get what they have killed away, whether fowl or rabbit, they will eat of it as long as it remains ſweet, before they return back to kill any more; in this circumſtance differing from the weaſel and ſtoat, who after they have deſtroyed their prey, only ſuck the blood out and very ſeldom take it away, but leave the fleſh behind untouched; if therefore you miſs any of your fowls, or find any of them in part devoured, it will be an almoſt infallible criterion for you to diſtinguiſh that the miſchief has been done by theſe vermin.

In

In order the better to deſtroy them I would recommend this method; at night after your fowls are gone to rooſt, mind to ſift ſome ſand over every little hole you ſuſpect he may come in at, and look at them again in the morning early before the fowls are moving, and you will ſoon diſcern the prints of their feet by their trampling about; then ſet a common hutch trap, ſuch as are uſed in warrens [pl. II. fig. 1.] and bait it with a piece of fowl or ſmall bird of any kind; hang the bait on the nail over the bridge, as has been obſerved before, and if you ſhould catch one of them remember to make the print of his feet in the ſand, which will enable you the better to know it another time, which has been my own conſtant practice, to diſcover what

kind of vermin have been there in any ſhape, whether made by ſprinkling mould or ſand, and if you ſhould not have a hutch trap in your poſſeſſion, then put at the place where you have tracked him a ſmall ſteel trap, and place a brick on each ſide ſo that he cannot avoid coming over the trap, which muſt be covered nicely with fine mould; do this in the afternoon, then cover it with a thin board that the fowls may not ſpring it in going to rooſt, then take the board or ſhelter away, and go in the morning before the fowls move, and if you ſhould not catch him the firſt night, obſerve the ſame methods for a few nights more and you will be ſure of him.

THE

THE

STOAT.

THIS animal in ſome places is called a Cain, and is the worſt ſmall vermin that exiſts, for if they approach to any warren, pheaſantry or chicken-garden, they do incredible miſchief, for whatever they kill they ſeldom eat, but only ſuck their blood, on which account they are more deſtructive and pernicious by far than all the vermin of the ferret-kind put together, as I have known one to kill a dozen fowls in a chicken-garden in the ſpace of one night, and then let

them remain behind after having ſucked out the blood at the ſide of the neck; but I cannot help here taking notice of a remarkable circumſtance, which is almoſt peculiar to this ſubtle animal, which is, that they will ſtart a hare from his form and follow it by the ſcent as true as the hound till he comes up to it again; when they will ſlyly faſten on the ſide of the neck, and there hang till the hare ſinks down with loſs of blood, and then is left untouched by the Stoat in regard to the fleſh, and in this manner I have ſhot many Stoats hanging on a hare's back, for if you ſhould chance to be near where this happens, you will hear the hare cry, which will direct you which way the affrighted animal is coming, be then ready

ready with your gun, and it will be next to a miracle if you miſs ſhooting him.

In the ſame manner I have ſhot theſe vermin in warrens, for in going by ſome of the burrows, I have heard a rabbit cry under ground, which occaſioned me to remain a ſhort time by the ſide of the burrow, when of a ſudden the rabbit has bolted out with the Stoat on its back, which I have then immediately ſhot dead, and by this means have killed great numbers of them.

Now in all chicken-gardens and pheaſantries, two or more hutch or box traps ſhould always remain ſet under the walls or pales baited with any ſmall bird,

bird, chicken, rabbits or fowls guts, when the perſon who looks after the fowls may likewiſe take a proper ſurvey of the traps, by which means they might be caught before they entered within ſide and did the miſchief, which otherwiſe muſt neceſſarily enſue. Let the traps be placed on the outſide, cloſe under the walls or pales with the back part againſt the ſame, make a wing or low paling, about eighteen inches high, with old pales, or form a ſmall hedge, about the ſame height from each end of the trap extending four or five yards aſlant, and about two or three yards open at the end from the wall, which will be a guide for them to enter into the trap, for they love to run under ſuch places, and unleſs prevented in proper time

time by the method here laid down, they will enter and deſtroy great numbers of rabbits, pheaſants, and poultry in a ſingle night's time; in moſt warrens therefore it is generally cuſtomary to have traps conſtantly ſet and baited, otherwiſe you would ſoon not have any rabbits left therein. In hare-warrens likewiſe, hutch or box traps ſhoult be placed in divers parts of the warren, with the two ends painted white and rubbed over with the guts of any animal, which will prevent the hares from entering in, but allure the vermin; let them be always baited as before obſerved, and if you find they likewiſe come to your hen-houſes, uſe the ſame method and they will naturally come into the trap and be catch-

ed,

ed, and in caſe you ſhould not have a hutch trap, ſet a ſmall ſteel trap as before directed for the polecat, and you will be certain of ſecuring him.

THE

THE

WEASEL.

THE Weaſel is the ſmalleſt vermin of the ferret-kind, and is a very noxious little animal in many particulars reſembling the ſtoat, laſt deſcribed, but is not capable, on account of its ſize, of doing half ſo much miſchief, though they will deſtroy young hares, rabbits, and chickens, and, ſucking out their blood leave them behind; but in one inſtance it is extremely pernicious in chicken-gardens, hen-houſes, &c. by ſucking the eggs in great abundance; they begin by making

making a ſmall hole at one end, at which they lick the yelk out and leave the ſhell behind, whereas the rats, on the contrary, always drag the eggs out of the neſt and carry them away, making a large hole in the egg and ſometimes break the ſhell in half, in order to get to the yelk, which the Weaſel will not, and by the above obſervation you will diſtinguiſh what animal has deſtroyed your eggs, and lay your trap accordingly. In ſome caſes the Weaſel is ſerviceable, for they will kill mice, water rats, young houſe rats, but the old Norway rat they are afraid to attack, ſhunning him if poſſible with the greateſt aſſiduity: they will likewiſe deſtroy moles, having ſometimes catched them in mole traps.

When you have diſcovered that they have deſtroyed your chickens or ſucked your eggs, get a hutch or box trap and bait it with a ſmall bird or egg, for I have catched many by baiting with an egg, and if you ſhould be at a loſs to know at which place he enters, make ſome ſhrapes either with ſand or fine mould as before deſcribed, and when you have diſcovered which way he comes, place ſome ſmall ſteel traps and it will be a thouſand to one but what you catch him; and when you have taken any of theſe vermin, make an impreſſion of their feet in ſome fine ſand, and you will be able to diſtinguiſh them another time: and if this was ſtrictly obſerved, it would be poſſible for you to know if even a mouſe had entered your parlour or di-

ning-room, by ſifting ſome ſand all over the bottom of the room at night, the laſt thing you do; then lock the door and in the morning you will ſee which way they come in and out; which remark will ſerve for all theſe kind of vermin in general. I conclude my account of this creature in deſcribing an odd method by which I have killed them, viz. when I have obſerved one run into a hedge, by ſtanding at a proper diſtance from the place, and imitating the ſqueaking of a mouſe, I have enticed the Weaſel to come out to the ſide of the hedge and then ſhot him dead, and by this means I have deſtroyed ſeveral of them.

THE

FERRET.

OF theſe animals there are two kinds or ſpecies, the white Ferret, and the polecat Ferret, ſo called from its great reſemblance to the polecat, but they are certainly two diſtinct animals, though by many perſons imagined to be one and the ſame, and confounded together; and as a proof of this diſtinction, I have had ſeveral excellent Ferrets killed by the polecat when turned into the rabbit burrows, wherein the polecat had taken prior poſſeſſion.

FERRETS are much uſed by the warreners in the following manner; when the young rabbits become of a tolerable bigneſs or growth, they go to the holes where they have been obſerved with a Dog-Ferret, and turn him in with a long ſmall line tied round his neck and the other end of the line in their hands; if he goes a conſiderable way in and finds no game, they draw him out again and put him into another hole; and when they perceive by the line that he has ſtruck at one of them, the line is gently drawn out, and he will bring the rabbit out in his mouth; the Ferret's throat is then preſſed or ſqueezed cloſe in order that he may quit his prey, and then he is turned in again, this method the reader may practice with ſuc-

ſucceſs, and take all the young rabbits out of their burrows, be their number never ſo great, but one caution is neceſſary to be obſerved, which is, not to lay the rabbits as you take them, in the wind of the Ferret, this will baulk your ſport, for if he ſcents or winds them he will not keep in the ground; in the courſe of my practice I have tried a great number of holes, in ſome of which he has gone ſix or ſeven fathom in almoſt ſtrait or horizontal angles, generally about three or four feet deep under the earth before he found his prey, but theſe are too great lengths to draw them, and would be loſing too much time, but if you find the rabbits at about three fathom deep it will anſwer your purpoſe, though you may try different angles or holes, and take

your game at the nigheſt; the above method is what is termed drawing them with a Line-Ferret.

In the winter ſeaſon when you are endeavouring to take the rabbits, and you cannot get them to bolt or come out of their holes, the following expedient may be put into execution in order to take great numbers of them together; make uſe of the Line-Ferret as before, turn him into one of the holes or angles till he finds them, but let him not remain there long enough to lay hold of the rabbits, then put him in at another, and ſo in like manner into all, and in the nigheſt angle you find them, there turn in the Ferret and let him lie while you can ſound him, what is meant by ſounding is you muſt

muſt liſten about where you think the line goes, with your ear to the ground, and where you hear him dig a trench croſs the hole, juſt behind the place where you ſounded down to the line, then follow the line till you come to him, and in all probability you will take a great number of rabbits, and this is the reaſon of trying the Ferret in ſo many different angles before you let him lie, for by this means they are driven together, for if you was to let him lie at firſt, perchance you might have the trouble of digging for only a ſingle rabbit, for they do not keep in any great degree together till driven ſo by the means aforeſaid, but remember not to muzzle your Line-Ferret.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER method of catching them is by what is termed ſtarting or bolting; to this end take the bitch or ſhe Ferret and muzzle and uſe it in this manner, where there are any rabbits in burrows or at hedges which you intend to deſtroy; when you firſt approach to the place remember to take the wind of it and fix a ſmall purſenet, made for the purpoſe, called a Flan in ſome countries, at each hole, do this as ſtill and ſilent as poſſible, then put in the Ferrets at the lee-ſide of the burrow, in order that you may have the wind of the rabbits, and ſtand at the lee-ſide yourſelf not making the leaſt noiſe, for though many perſons have a notion, that do what you will the rabbits will not ſtart, yet this is a miſtake, for if they hear a noiſe above ground

ground they will fly down into their lower holes till they can run no further, then the Ferret gets behind them and ſcratches them till they bleed, in which ſituation it is impoſſible for him to get before to drive them out into the net, and this is the reaſon I enjoin a ſtrict ſilence, for then he catches them in their upper angles, on which they bolt out immediately, for they never lie in the lower ones till they are diſturbed above ground; it is therefore a miſtaken notion of a great many people to hunt and drive in all the rabbits they can find before they put the Ferrets into the ground, but this method is entirely wrong, if you intend to ſtart or bolt them, for if they are once driven to ground it is ten to one if they move, but will lie and be ſcratched to death: but

but if you hunt them with a Line-Ferret, you will then have nothing to do but to ſound your Ferret and dig them out as before directed.

I SHALL here beg leave to make a remark relative to a bad practice of the warreners, who make too frequent uſe of Ferrets, which method I entirely diſapprove of; for, was I in poſſeſſion of a warren, which I occupied for my livelihood, I would never put a Ferret into the ground at all, as it does a warren infinite prejudice and damage; it makes the rabbits forſake their own home and run away and lie out till they are killed, for they have a fixed antipathy againſt entering into the ground where there is the leaſt ſmell of the Ferret; they have the ſame diſ-

like

like to other vermin, and the Ferret is as bad as any of them; my own method of catching rabbits is by nets made into pound pitches and then you may ſort them as you think proper, the beſt you turn over the net and the worſt you may kill; on the contrary the Ferret has no reſpect to either but will deſtroy the good as well as the bad.

The Ferret, as has been before obſerved, in many inſtances reſembles the polecat, and if one ſhould get away from his hutch and get into the garden or field, if you ſhould chance to get him again, he becomes ſo wild that you can ſcarcely venture to touch him. I have catched them at the henhouſe in a farm yard where they come to

to kill the fowls, for being ſet by ſome people to drive out the rats, they ſometimes loſe one, when he preys about as the polecat does; and will ſometimes feed upon young rats, but as to the old ones thoſe he does not chooſe to face, for I have had ſeveral good Ferrets as could be, all beat by an old rat, which they will not touch except they are very ſharp ſet and hungry, this experiment I have made by keeping one faſting for a day and a night, and then he killed an old fierce rat and eat him preſently. This affords a uſeful leſſon, for if you are going to make uſe of your Ferrets for any buſineſs keep them faſting for ſome time before, they being of a very ſluggiſh diſpoſition, and when their bellies are full they will not hunt after any thing or work in the

the leaſt: I have often turned them into holes after the rats, when if they find a neſt of young ones, they will eat them, and if ſufficient to ſatisfy their hunger they will hunt after no more prey but fall a ſleep, for they only go in ſearch of it to ſerve themſelves, and when their bellies are full you may hunt by yourſelf; this is the true nature of the Ferret.

In ſome places people employ them inſtead of cats, in deſtroying rats, when they often prove of good ſervice eſpecially in under floors of any kind, and when they lie between the Boards. But in ceilings and common ſewers they are not ſo ſerviceable; in the firſt they can do no good, and in the latter they do not care to wet their feet;

except when ſharp ſet, and then they will ſeize the rat, which ſometimes bolts from the Ferret and is driven into a narrow angle or corner, where being kept at bay and made deſperate, he maintains a fierce combat with the Ferret, and makes him retire with his face and head terribly bitten and bloody.

THE

THE

HEDGEHOG.

THIS little animal greatly reſembles the porcupine, though in miniature, his body, being armed and fortified all over with ſharp-pointed quills, which is an admirable defence for him againſt his enemies. It has been aſſerted by ſome writers, and is a notion commonly received, that it will ſuck the milk of cows in the night time, while they are a-ſleep in the fields, and bite the dug in the action in ſuch a manner that the cow never recovers, but this opinion I believe to be falſe and erroneous, having never been able, for many years ſtrict enquiry and obſervance, to diſcover a ſingle inſtance of it; their chief food conſiſts

in acorns, crabs and roots, in grubbing up of which latter they damage the ground; you may catch them by ſetting a hutch trap under the wall or pales of any park or warren, as theſe animals will run under them in the night a conſiderable way, having taken ſeveral of them by this method in the ſpace of a week. I recommend it therefore as the moſt preferable, as few dogs will venture to kill them, their quills being ſo extremely ſharp, and when they find they are purſued or attacked, they immediately roll themſelves up round as a globe or ball and lie as if they were dead; but take and put them into a puddle or pan of water, and they will expand themſelves immediately. I know of no particular bait they are fond of.

THE

THE

NORWAY RAT.

THIS vermin was brought originally from Norway to England, in ſhips trading for timber, &c. to that country, and being of foreign extraction, they are commonly, though erroneouſly, called in many places the Hanover rat.

THERE are very few buildings either in town or country, that are not troubled and peſtered with them. Now you muſt carefully obſerve what part of the building they frequent; examine the ſewers or ſhores, for they

will find their way up them where there is no grate, and if there is one, they will gnaw through a ſoft brick, and ſcratch the dirt out by the ſide of the ſhore into it, and there lie dry, which often ſtops up and greatly detriments the ſhore. If there are any hog-ſties, where hogs are fattening in winter time, the Rats without doors, about the buildings, will repair to the ſties; they are very apt to get under the floors, greatly to the damage of the houſes; they will likewiſe get behind the wainſcots and incielings, and make a noiſe that is very diſagreeable to the family: it is neceſſary therefore to mind where they go in and out, for ſome way or other they muſt of neceſſity have, as they cannot long remain there without meat and water. In order

order therefore, for the better diſcovery of the ſame, ſift ſome ſand about, and if any move, you will eaſily ſee which way they go, for this is an infallible method to betray all vermin; in the ſame manner, if the compariſon may be allowed, as Daniel in the apocrypha traced the footſteps of the men, women and children coming in at the private door, by means of ſifting ſome aſhes. In the country ſometimes they will lie out in the fields and hedges as long as any corn remains upon the ground, and breed in the moſt prolific manner, for I have known them frequently bring forth twelve young ones at one time; and I once caught an old female Rat, that had given ſuck with ſixteen teats; and as a ſtill farther proof of their fruitfulneſs, I have known them

them breed when only half grown; but in this caſe they have had only three or four young ones at a time. But to return, when the cold weather comes on, they flock in prodigious numbers to the houſes and other buildings; they likewiſe repair to the barns and wheat-ricks, and ſometimes I have known them take to the ricks notwithſtanding they have been placed on ſtands, for they will jump up to the top of the ſtones placed as a ſafe-guard with ſurpriſing agility, which it was imagined was impoſſible for them to do, and get into the ricks, where they always make holes in the thatch. I have known them to take to hay-ricks and get to the top of the thatch, and bite through the ſtraw, in ſearch of what little corn may be left in the ſame;

ſame; ſo that the ſtacks or ricks have been obliged to be thatched again.

HAVING given a general deſcription of theſe animals, I proceed to point out the methods of catching them in the various places they haunt; whether in the cellars, ſhores, hog-ſties, barns, ſtables, ſlaughter-houſes, brew-houſes, ſtill-houſes, or any other place, be it what it will. When you have diſcovered their haunt, you muſt put a trap, hereafter to be deſcribed, as near the place as poſſible; put a ſmall piece of ſtick acroſs under each end of the trap, near the ſtandard, to prevent it from falling down or ſtriking, and it will remain in the ſame poſition as ſet, and the Rats have free liberty to go

go in and out at pleaſure, in order to embolden them before you ſet your traps in earneſt to take them: then ſcent it, by a method ſoon to be explained, and it will not want ſcenting again for a twelvemonth; for this is my conſtant rule to ſcent them only once a year, which will be ſufficient. Take ſome chaff of any kind and mix ſome wheat corn with it, and put ſome about the bottom of the trap, this prevents them from any notion that it is a trap. If it be in a place where you cannot procure chaff, throw a handful of oats, barley, or malt about the bottom; but chaff, mixed with ſome kind of corn, as before obſerved, is preferable. You will have occaſion to do this only for the firſt time of ſetting the traps to work; for when once ſome

Rats

Rats have been catched in them and have piſſed and dunged therein, they will be in better order for it; it is a wrong practice therefore in many people to waſh the trap clean before they ſet it again: on the contrary let the dung remain in; for this reaſon, that the Rat will enter with great confidence where he finds his brethren have been before him; but if it hinders the trap from ſtriking, or it is got under the bridge, then take it out.

Now if you perceive that they come to four or five different places, I would adviſe by all means to put a trap at each place. Some people are afraid of a little expence and make

ſhift

ſhift with one trap only, in which caſe you are obliged to move your trap about, which makes them ſhy, and miſſing ſome of their companions renders them ſtill ſhyer; mind therefore to have a trap at each place, ſet them all to feed at the ſame time, and put a little bundle of ſtraw at each end, that they may go in and out privately; and if you cannot get any ſtraw, ſhelter each end of the trap with ſome old boards, and keep them as private as poſſible, for this they like, and it will anſwer your intent the better. When your traps are all ſet, as near the places where they run as you can, you muſt feed them after the following manner: put ſome of the feed (the recipe to prepare which will be hereafter given) at their holes, ſcatter a little

tle quite up to the end of the trap and ſo long to the bridge within-ſide, and there put a handful. When this is performed at each trap, you muſt ſtay two or three nights before you go to them, and you will ſee which trap they have eaten out of; perhaps from all of them, or poſſibly from only one, as ſometimes they are very ſhy; for I have known them to eat the food prepared for them from their holes quite up to the trap, for a week before they would enter in; but when once they have entered in, and find they are not hurt, they will then come freely enough, In the next place when you go round to take a ſurvey of your traps, take notice of thoſe they have eaten out of and put ſome more food in, but after the firſt time of feeding

them, you need only put an handful on the bridge. Make it your rule to take this ſurvey in the morning, and when you perceive they come to feed boldly and freely, then is the proper time to think of taking them; but for two or three nights previous to your catching them, when you have given them food in the morning, remember to look at the traps again at night; for if it be a quiet place they will feed by day-light, and where this happens, ſet thoſe traps going in the day-time, and the reſt in the evening; and as they are caught take them out of the trap by means of a little wire cage; which is deſcribed at the end of the Rat trap ſtruck in [pl. V.] afterwards put them into the large cage, proceed in this manner till bed-time, and then put

put up all your traps again that they cannot ſtrike, by means of a ſmall piece of ſtick laid acroſs under the ends, as before mentioned, and put ſome more food in them, for two or three nights longer, till they are become bold; then ſet them all again; and this may be tranſacted without breaking your reſt in the leaſt; but in ſome places, where they lie in the cielings or behind the wainſcots, they are not in motion till the houſe is ſtill, and the family gone to reſt, and where this happens you muſt ſit up later, and when any perſon has this book in his poſſeſſion, by following the directions therein carefully, he may eaſily get the better of theſe vermin.

When I have been catching theſe vermin at any nobleman's or gentleman's houſe, after having been abſent for ſome time, I have been obliged to ſit up all the night, in order to keep their numbers under: but when a perſon is in the houſe or near the premiſes, there is no neceſſity of his loſing his reſt, or attending in ſo cloſe a manner, becauſe he may take his opportunity to catch them when he thinks proper; and on any night he fixes for that purpoſe, if any buſineſs intervenes that he cannot conveniently put his deſign into execution, then let him give them a little food again, and they will not be balked. Be certain to remember this piece of advice; for when the Rats come for their ſupper, and you have neglected to leave them any, then

then they will be diſappointed, and obliged to go to other places in ſearch of food: therefore when you have ſome at feed, mind to keep them there at the different places, to which they will come with the greateſt regularity, if not balked; ſo continue ſtill feeding them, never neglecting a ſingle night, till you have a leiſure evening; and that will encourage them to be bold and come freely. Obſerve that night that you ſet your traps going, to lay food that they cannot carry away, and put a little on the bridge, and on each ſide, that you may be ſure of catching what comes to feed; and if in going round to your traps two or three times, you obſerve one of them that has not ſtruck, ſtrike it yourſelf; for ſometimes they will not go down eaſily, if

they ſtand long but ſet hard, then the Rats will eat the food out and not ſtrike the trap. Now as they are caught go round and take them out with your ſmall cage, and put them into the large one: in this manner I have caught ſeventy-two in one night's time, tho' ſometimes in that trap where they fed the beſt I have not caught one rat according to expectation. If this ſhould happen to you, be not in the leaſt diſcouraged; for they will come again, and this diſappointment may have been occaſioned by their having met with ſome other vermin in their way; for ſometimes a weaſel, ſtoat, or polecat, will go in and balk your traps as they leave a moſt intolerable ſtench behind them, very diſagreeable to the Rats; and in the courſe of my practice, I have caught

caught great numbers of the animals juſt before mentioned, but more particularly the polecat, all in the rat-traps; by which it is evident how naturally theſe vermin will follow one another, when prowling in the night after their prey; but theſe events which now and then happen, ought not, in the leaſt, to ſlacken your diligence; for by care and perſeverance, and by following the above rules, you will ſoon take and deſtroy theſe terrible and ſubtle domeſtic enemies.

THE following cautions are neceſſary in removing them from the trap to the cage: When you go round in order to ſurvey your traps and find one down, take the ſmall wire cage, and put it cloſe to the right hand end, which

which is the handieſt method of taking them out, unleſs the trap ſtands in ſuch a poſition that you cannot command that end. When you have placed the cage properly, pull that end of the trap up next your right hand, juſt high enough for the rat to come out into the cage, let the candle ſtand down by the cage, which you muſt hold faſt with your hand, that they may not drive it away; for ſometimes when they ſee light, they will ſpring or bolt out with ſuch velocity, that except you hold the cage tight, and cloſe to the trap, they will drive it away, and ſo eſcape. At other times they are ſulky, and will not come out if they can help it; in this caſe you muſt make a noiſe, or rattle againſt the

the other end of the trap, and they will ſoon bolt out into the cage. Another piece of advice is here neceſſary, for when one Rat has come out you may poſſibly think there are no more in the trap and take the cage away; but be certain of this firſt; for I have had ſeven at one time in the ſame trap. By obſerving this rule you will be enabled to guard againſt any of them now getting away, after you have been at the trouble of taking them.

I SHALL now give the reader a very minute and exact deſcription of the make and conſtruction of the trap, made uſe of in the foregoing inſtances, which, with the print annexed, will

will give him a full, perfect, and adequate idea of the ſame, which is made in the following manner: Take three boards [pl. III.] two feet two inches long, let the two ſides ſtand on the bottom nine inches high, by nine inches wide in the clear; then take a thick bit of wood three inches wide, and put it in the top of the trap in the centre, for the upright ſtandard E. [pl. IV.] to go in; in the front of the trap at the bottom, cut a hole for the trigger, half an inch wide and three inches high B B; line the inſide of the hole with ſome pieces of tin about an inch wide, that they may not deface the inſide of the trap, for a Rat will always gnaw and ſcratch wherever he ſees any light: then take two pieces of board to go in even or level at each

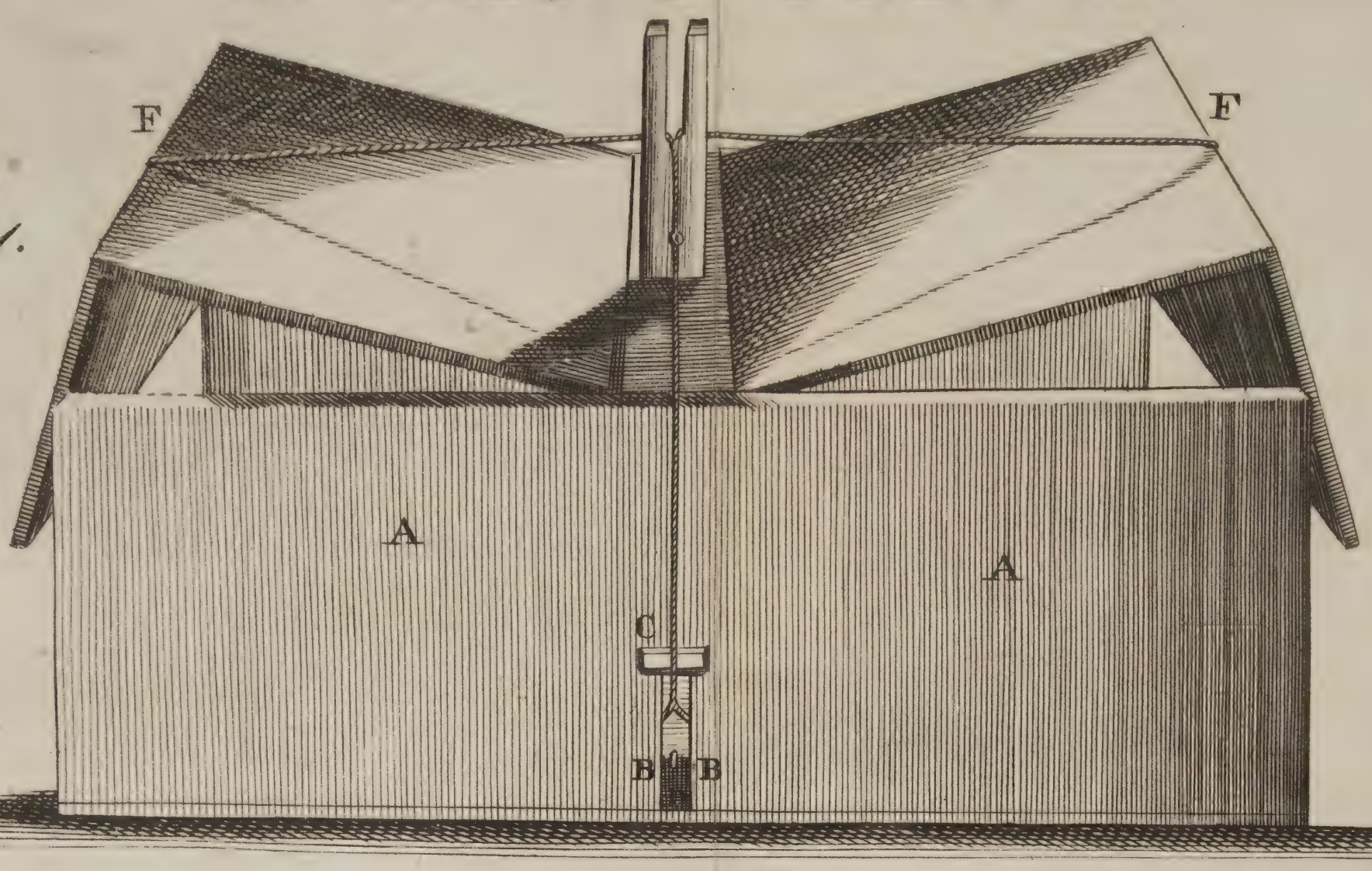
each end and under theſe pieces take two ſhort pieces, ſix inches high to go in eaſy, nailing the top down to theſe at each end, and then hanging the top pieces F F within an inch of the end neareſt the centre, they will go up and down together. In the centre, at the bottom of the trap againſt the back, take a piece of wood two inches long and half an inch thick, make a hole in the centre of it, then put a nail through without a head, nail it down to the bottom of the trap, and let the nail ſtand up half an inch, in order to hang the bridge on: then take a piece of half inch board, five inches wide, and ſeven inches and a half long, make a hole at one end in the centre, and at the other end put a ſtrong bit of wire D, and let it come through the trig-

trigger hole BB, bent and turned up at the extremity a quarter of an inch, that it may hitch or faſten to the trigger, and over the trigger-hole about half an inch, nail a little piece of wood C about two inches long, in order to ſtop the tiller, to prevent its going into the trigger-hole; let your ſtandard E, at the top of the trap, be five inches high with a notch in the centre oppoſite the trigger hole; let it be half an inch wide and two inches down; then you muſt put a ſmall nail at each end, to both which tie a ſtring and bring them through the notch in the ſtandard and tie them both together; then cut one end off, and bringing the other end down tie it to the trigger, which is the ſmall piece of wood tied to the end of the ſtring, in order to ſet the trap,

Plate IV.

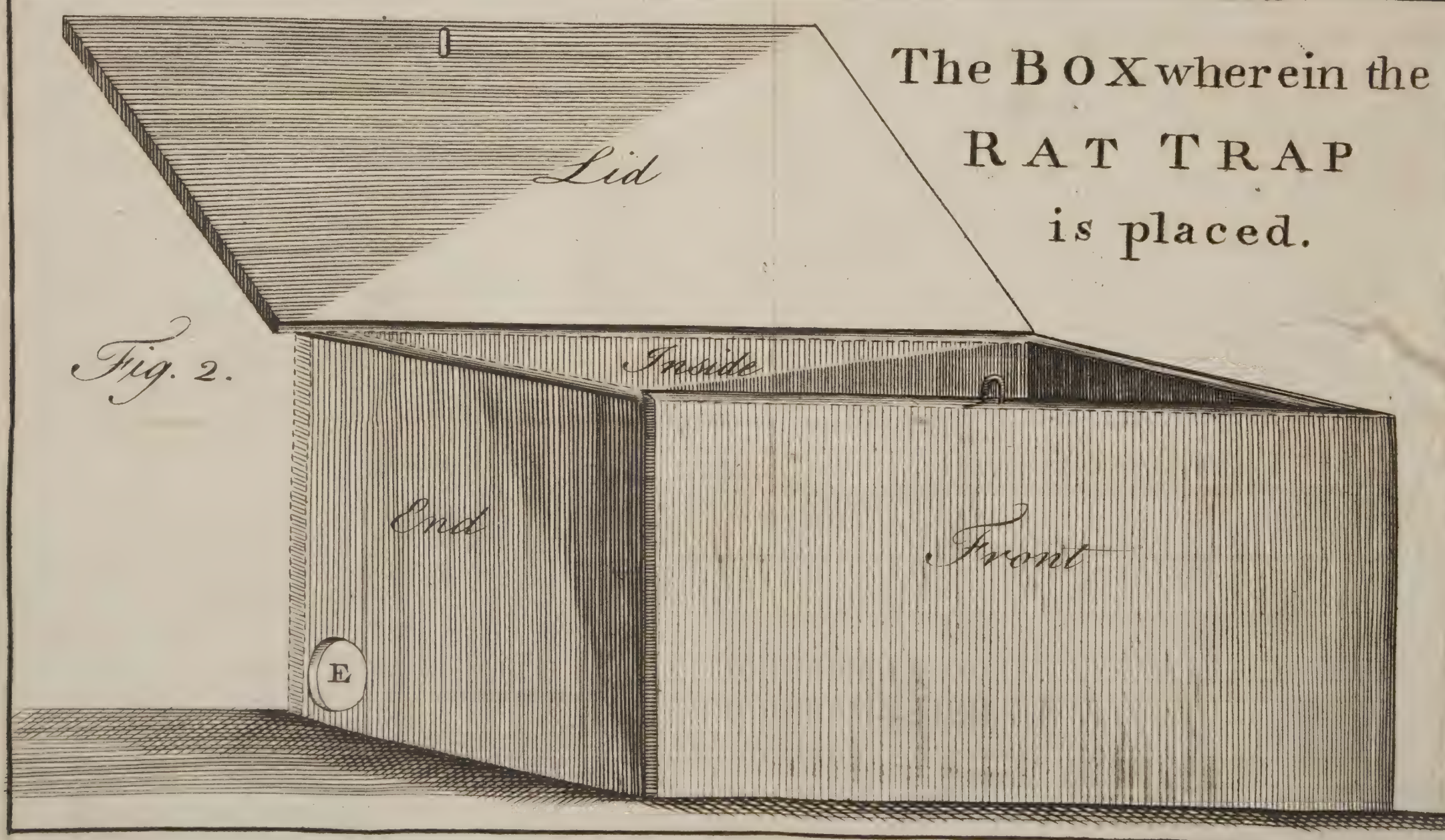
The RAT TRAP set.

Fig. 1.



The BOX wherein the RAT TRAP is placed.

Fig. 2.



trap, which muſt be ſet up about ſix or ſeven inches high at each end. The intent of having the under pieces but ſix inches high, is, that you may be enabled to take them out with the greater ſafety; for when you place the ſmall wire cage at the end of the trap, then lift the end thereof level or even with the ſmall hole at the ſide of the cage, and there will be ſufficient room for the Rat to go into the cage very eaſily.

HAVING deſcribed the trap, I now proceed to another particular, which is, that you muſt put it into a large box, in order to keep other animals from eating the food prepared for the Rat, and likewiſe to hinder the dogs

from coming to it; for ſometimes, when they find a trap where the Rats come to feed, they will lie by it and balk the Rats. This Box, therefore, is a ſafe-guard or defence for them, for when any thing diſturbs them, they will run in at the holes at each end of the bottom of the box to ſave themſelves, and when the ends of the trap are ſheltered, they will feed quietly; if therefore your dogs ſhould come and diſturb the traps, you muſt balk them, and during your abſence mind to lock the boxes to keep any perſon from them, which has always been my conſtant practice.

The box [pl. IV. fig. 2.] is made in this manner: three feet long, a foot and half wide, and twenty inches high, with

with two ſmall holes E, one at each end, at the back, cloſe to the bottom of the box, about three inches diameter or ſquare as you like; then the Rats can go in and out without being diſturbed, and no other animal can take their food but themſelves. Let the inſide traps have a pound weight of ſheet lead nailed on at each end, which will make them ſtrike quick, and keep the end down; for I have known them to get out of theſe traps for want of ſufficient weight: and for the more effectually preventing them from getting their noſes under the end and lifting them up, take a ſmall piece of wood an inch wide, and three quarters of an inch thick, and put it acroſs at the bottom in the inſide at each end, that the end of the trap may

ſtrike down flufh without ſide. Let this piece of wood be lined with tin, that they may not gnaw it away. Let the traps be made of ſtout inch-fir, which is the beſt wood you can make uſe of; for that will never warp nor bend as other wood does; but any old packing boxes will do for the outſide. If they are not exactly made as I have already preſcribed, they will anſwer the intent, yet if you are obliged to make new ones, they may as well be made according to the directions before given; but if it is a quiet place where you can lock the door, or in a barn, or the outſide of a barn at the farm-houſe, the following trap may be uſed with great advantage and efficacy, which is the common hutch or box trap,

trap, which however, muſt be ſhelter-ed at each end as before directed. This trap the reader is referred to [plate II. fig. 1] and likewiſe to the deſcription of the ſame, in the accouns of the wild cat, in page 49 of this work. And here I beg leave to give a general cau-tion to the reader, which is, to follow the directions laid down in the prece-ding pages, and practiſe them by him-ſelf; for company will balk the ſport, and when once the traps are balked, the blame will fall upon the author, who is not in the leaſt in fault; for he will maintain and abide by every in-ſtruction before given to be exactly juſt and true. Remember likewiſe, that they are a very ſubtle vermin, for if they in the leaſt ſuſpect what you are about, you cannot catch them,

for I would not have you imagine that any kind of vermin will ever enter a trap, knowing it to be one; on the contrary, you muſt entice and encourage them, by the means before laid down, which will make them bold, and enable you to catch them with the greateſt facility imaginable. Now when you have ſet all your traps to work, you will want to ſcent them, which muſt be performed in this manner, take twenty drops of the oil of rhodium, ſix or ſeven grains of muſk, half an ounce of the oil of anniſeed, put them in a ſmall phial for uſe, and before you ſet the traps, ſhake them well together, then ſcent your traps as follows: Take a ſmall piece of paper twiſted up, dip it in the bottle and rub each end of the trap, and like-

wiſe the holes at each end of the box, leave the paper in each trap, and put two or three drops on the bridge, and let every trap be ſerved in this manner; the reaſon of mixing theſe three ingredients together is that I have always tried it with ſucceſs, for in ſome places the Rats love the ſmell of rhodium, in others they like the ſmell of muſk, and again in other places they love the ſmell of anniſeed: on this account I mix them all together, that the ſcent of either one or other of the ingredients may entice and allure them to the trap. Another piece of inſtruction is neceſſary to be given: when you firſt ſet your traps to work, different means are to be uſed according to the different places you are catching at; if it is a dog-kennel, put ſome ſmall

ſmall pieces of boiled fleſh about in the trap, as well as the feed; if in a ſlaughter-houſe, put ſome ſmall bits of fat, or ſmall pieces of guts; if in a brew-houſe put ſome malt; if in a ſtill-houſe put ſome of the meal; if in a mill, the ſame; if in a barn, put in ſome corn as well as the feed, and ſo likewiſe in all other inſtances. The reaſon of this method of proceeding is, in whatever places your traps are ſet, put ſome of the ſame things in the trap as they have been before uſed to; for then they have not ſo great a notion of its being a trap; you muſt not uſe any of the ſcenting in the feed, for there is nothing they are ſo fond of in their food as the oil of carraways.

The Recipe how to make the Food or Feed.

TAKE a pound of good flour, three ounces of treacle, and ſix drops of the oil of carraways, put them all into a bowl and rub them well together till it looks all alike; be ſure to mix it well, then put a pound of the crumb of bread to it; for they like the bread mixt with their feed better than the feed alone, it being too luſcious, for which reaſon they do not like it ſo well by itſelf; but that night on which you catch, put no bread to it, leſt they ſhould carry it away.

THERE is a neceſſity for your having two wire cages, one ſmall one, [pl. II.

II. fig. 2.] uſed in going round your traps in order to take the vermin out to put them into the larger one, made in the manner following:

THE ſmall wire cage muſt be thus conſtructed; let it be nine inches in length by nine wide, four inches and a half high with a fall in it at one end and a door at the other, the firſt to let them in at and the other to let them out into the great cage, which muſt be made as follows: Let it be twenty inches long, nine inches wide, and eight inches high, with a fall at one end to let them in from the ſmall cage, and a door on the top to take them out at; now when you are catching, ſet your great cage out of the way at ſome diſtance that the other Rats may

not

not hear them ſqueak, for that will baulk your ſport and occaſion them to run away. In the morning, if you do not chuſe to drown them, perhaps you will want to hunt thoſe you have taken, and know not how to take them out at the top of the great cage; but this may be done very eaſily; for if you do not hurt them, they will not bite you; for by ſtanding together all night in the trap they are cowed and have not the leaſt notion of biting, unleſs you ſhould happen to ſqueeze them too hard; but you may take them out one by one, with your hand very ſafely. Now this matter is a ſecret; for we always inculcate the notion that they will bite you terribly, unleſs you rub your hands with ſome kind of ingredient or other. I was once of that opi-

opinion myſelf, but am now better convinced: indeed when there are but four or five left behind in the trap, they are apt to be very violent and outrageous, you may then take them and ſhake them out to your dog. There is a wide difference in the temper and diſpoſition of theſe animals; for ſome are ſo ſavage and untamed that they will ſet up their backs, looking very fiercely and crying out, if you do but look at them; but when you meet with one of this kind, ſhake him well in the cage together with the reſt, and obſerve when he has put his head among the others, and take him out by his tail and he will not bite you; but obſerve when you have firſt catched them do not go to handle them directly, for

then

this is not wanting

tle quite up to the end of the trap and ſo long to the bridge within-ſide, and there put a handful. When this is performed at each trap, you muſt ſtay two or three nights before you go to them, and you will ſee which trap they have eaten out of; perhaps from all of them, or poſſibly from only one, as ſometimes they are very ſhy; for I have known them to eat the food prepared for them from their holes quite up to the trap, for a week before they would enter in; but when once they have entered in, and find they are not hurt, they will then come freely enough. In the next place when you go round to take a ſurvey of your traps, take notice of thoſe they have eaten out of and put ſome more food in, but after the firſt time of feeding

 them,

This is not wanting

them, you need only put an handful on the bridge. Make it your rule to take this ſurvey in the morning, and when you perceive they come to feed boldly and freely, then is the proper time to think of taking them; but for two or three nights previous to your catching them, when you have given them food in the morning, remember to look at the traps again at night; for if it be a quiet place they will feed by day-light, and where this happens, ſet thoſe traps going in the day-time, and the reſt in the evening; and as they are caught take them out of the trap by means of a little wire cage; which is deſcribed at the end of the Rat trap ſtruck in [pl. V.] afterwards put them into the large cage, proceed in this manner till bed-time, and then put

This is not wanting

put up all your traps again that they cannot ſtrike, by means of a ſmall piece of ſtick laid acroſs under the ends, as before mentioned, and put ſome more food in them, for two or three nights longer, till they are become bold; then ſet them all again; and this may be tranſacted without breaking your reſt in the leaſt; but in ſome places, where they lie in the cielings or behind the wainſcots, they are not in motion till the houſe is ſtill, and the family gone to reſt, and where this happens you muſt ſit up later, and when any perſon has this book in his poſſeſſion, by following the directions therein carefully, he may eaſily get the better of theſe vermin.

This is not wanting

When I have been catching theſe vermin at any nobleman's or gentleman's houſe, after having been abſent for ſome time, I have been obliged to ſit up all the night, in order to keep their numbers under: but when a perſon is in the houſe or near the premiſes, there is no neceſſity of his loſing his reſt, or attending in ſo cloſe a manner, becauſe he may take his opportunity to catch them when he thinks proper; and on any night he fixes for that purpoſe, if any buſineſs intervenes that he cannot conveniently put his deſign into execution, then let him give them a little food again, and they will not be balked. Be certain to remember this piece of advice; for when the Rats come for their ſupper, and you have neglected to leave them any, then

then they will be disappointed, and obliged to go to other places in search of food: therefore when you have some at feed, mind to keep them there at the different places, to which they will come with the greatest regularity, if not balked; so continue still feeding them, never neglecting a single night, till you have a leisure evening; and that will encourage them to be bold and come freely. Observe that night that you set your traps going, to lay food that they cannot carry away, and put a little on the bridge, and on each side, that you may be sure of catching what comes to feed; and if in going round to your traps two or three times, you observe one of them that has not struck, strike it yourself; for sometimes they will not go down easily, if

This is not wanting

they ſtand long but ſet hard, then the Rats will eat the food out and not ſtrike the trap. Now as they are caught go round and take them out with your ſmall cage, and put them into the large one: in this manner I have caught ſeventy-two in one night's time, tho' ſometimes in that trap where they fed the beſt I have not caught one rat according to expectation. If this ſhould happen to you, be not in the leaſt diſcouraged; for they will come again, and this diſappointment may have been occaſioned by their having met with ſome other vermin in their way; for ſometimes a weaſel, ſtoat, or polecat, will go in and balk your traps as they leave a moſt intolerable ſtench behind them, very diſagreeable to the Rats; and in the courſe of my practice, I have caught

This is not wanting

caught great numbers of the animals juſt before mentioned, but more particularly the polecat, all in the rat-traps; by which it is evident how naturally theſe vermin will follow one another, when prowling in the night after their prey; but theſe events which now and then happen, ought not, in the leaſt, to ſlacken your diligence; for by care and perſeverance, and by following the above rules, you will ſoon take and deſtroy theſe terrible and ſubtle domeſtic enemies.

THE following cautions are neceſſary in removing them from the trap to the cage: When you go round in order to ſurvey your traps and find one down, take the ſmall wire cage, and put it cloſe to the right hand end, which

which is the handieſt method of taking them out, unleſs the trap ſtands in ſuch a poſition that you cannot command that end. When you have placed the cage properly, pull that end of the trap up next your right hand, juſt high enough for the rat to come out into the cage, let the candle ſtand down by the cage, which you muſt hold faſt with your hand, that they may not drive it away; for ſometimes when they ſee light, they will ſpring or bolt out with ſuch velocity, that except you hold the cage tight, and cloſe to the trap, they will drive it away, and ſo eſcape. At other times they are ſulky, and will not come out if they can help it; in this caſe you muſt make a noiſe, or rattle againſt the

the other end of the trap, and they will ſoon bolt out into the cage. Another piece of advice is here neceſſary, for when one Rat has come out you may poſſibly think there are no more in the trap and take the cage away; but be certain of this firſt; for I have had ſeven at one time in the ſame trap. By obſerving this rule you will be enabled to guard againſt any of them now getting away, after you have been at the trouble of taking them.

I SHALL now give the reader a very minute and exact deſcription of the make and conſtruction of the trap, made uſe of in the foregoing inſtances, which, with the print annexed, will

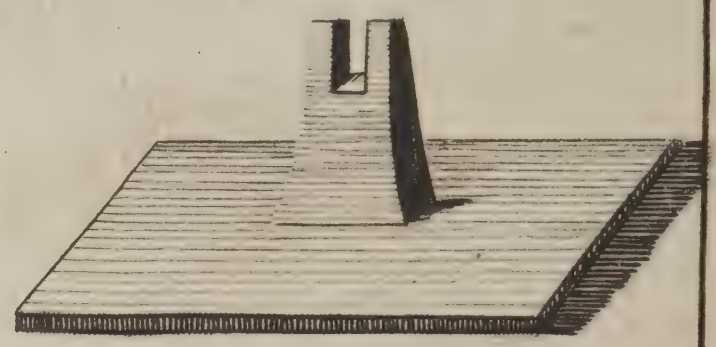
will give him a full, perfect, and adequate idea of the ſame, which is made in the following manner: Take three boards [pl. III.] two feet two inches long, let the two ſides ſtand on the bottom nine inches high, by nine inches wide in the clear; then take a thick bit of wood three inches wide, and put it in the top of the trap in the centre, for the upright ſtandard E. [pl. IV.] to go in; in the front of the trap at the bottom, cut a hole for the trigger, half an inch wide and three inches high B B; line the inſide of the hole with ſome pieces of tin about an inch wide, that they may not deface the inſide of the trap, for a Rat will always gnaw and ſcratch wherever he ſees any light: then take two pieces of board to go in even or level at each

The SEPERATE PARTS of the RAT TRAP described.

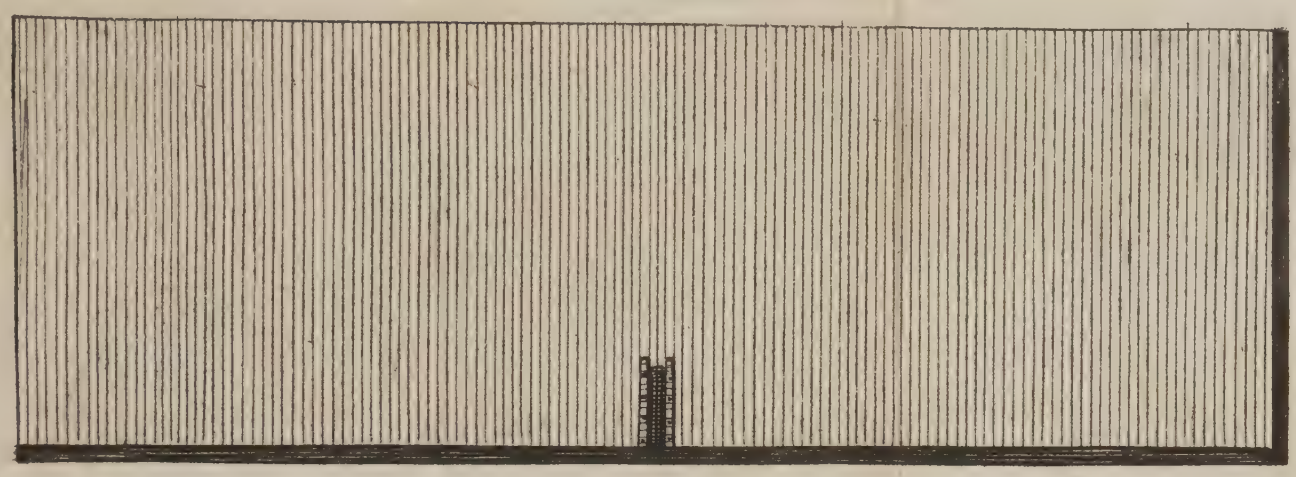
Plate III.

Bottom

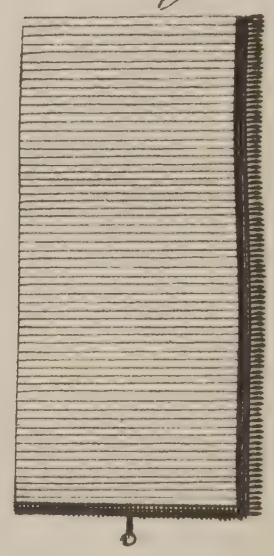
Standard



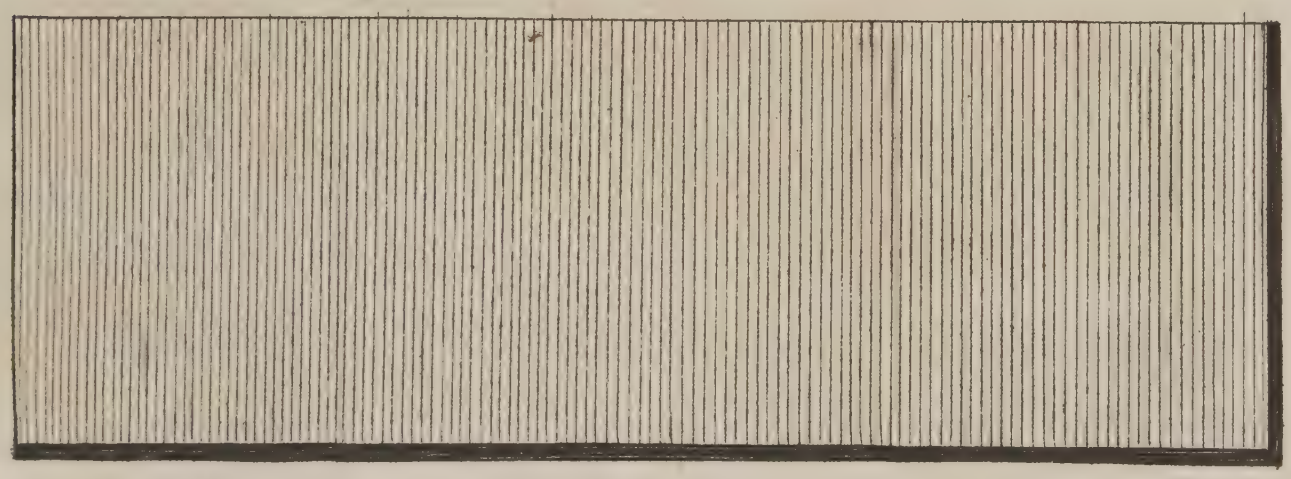
Front side



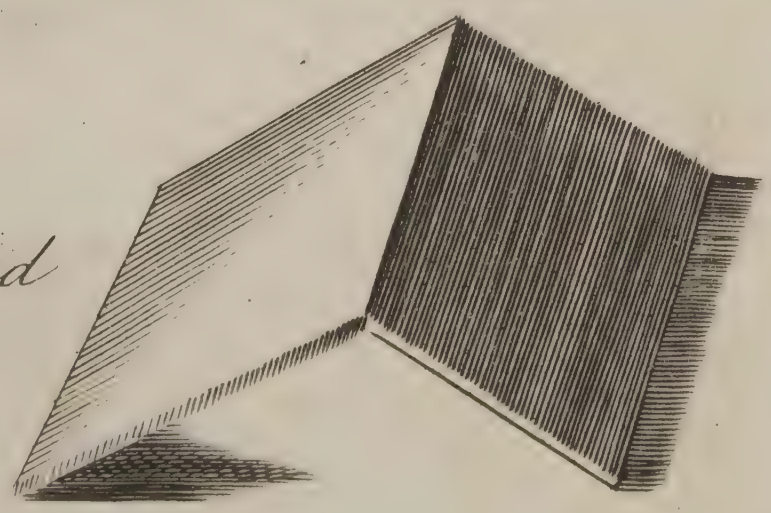
Bridge



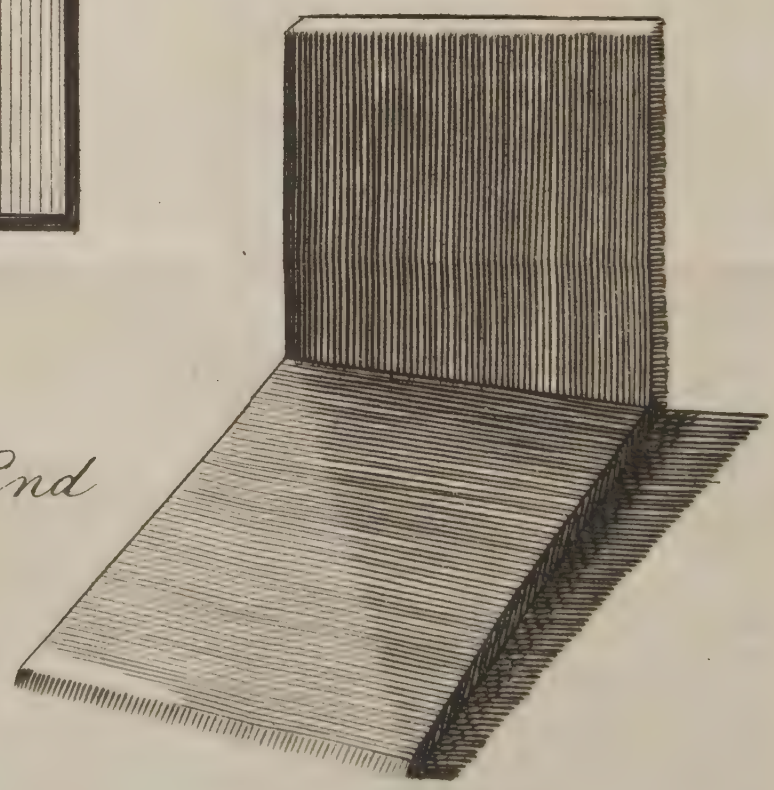
Back side



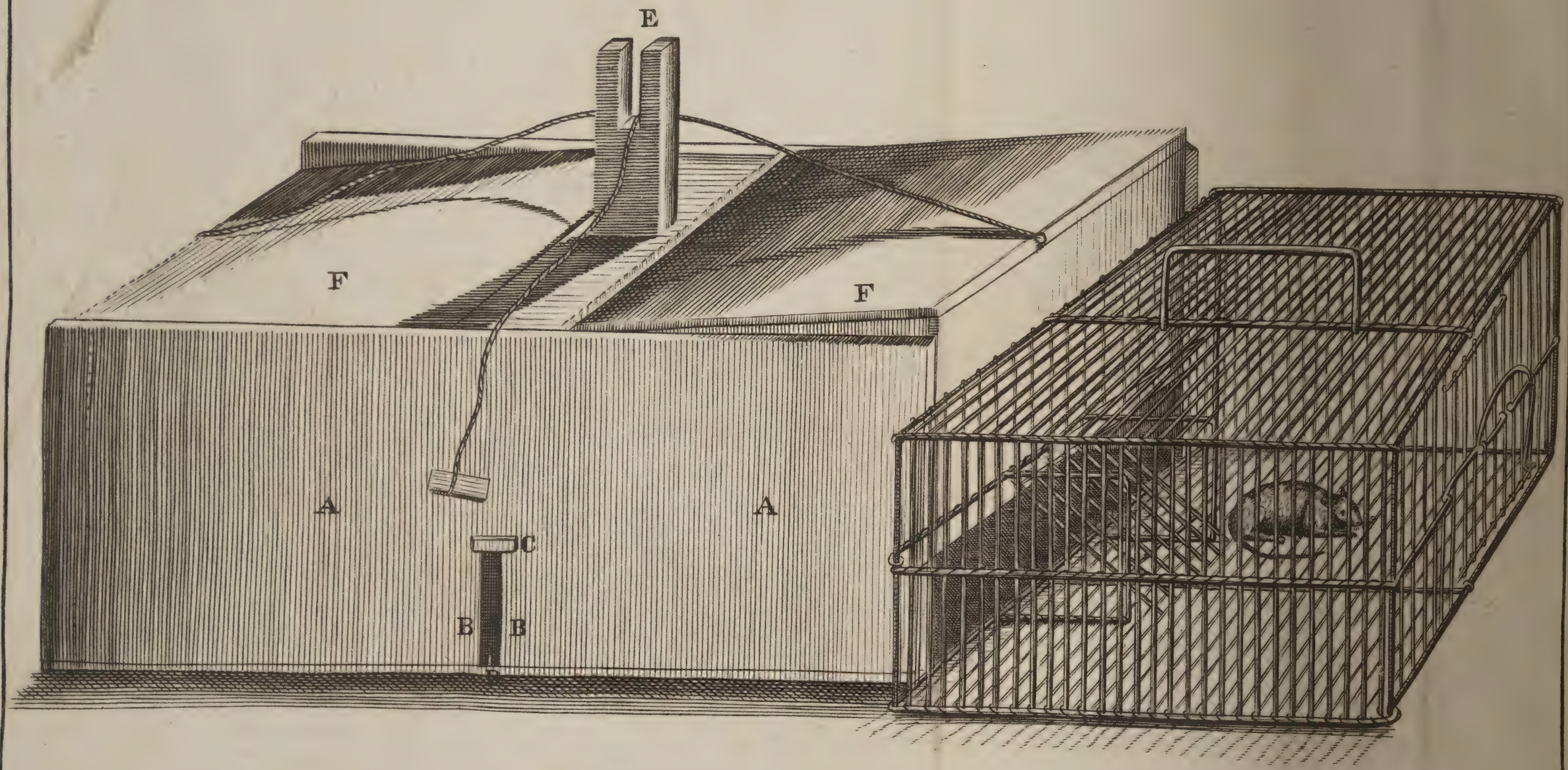
End



End



The RAT TRAP ſtruck, deſcribing also the CAGE for taking out the VERMIN.



each end and under theſe pieces take two ſhort pieces, ſix inches high to go in eaſy, nailing the top down to theſe at each end, and then hanging the top pieces F F within an inch of the end neareſt the centre, they will go up and down together. In the centre, at the bottom of the trap againſt the back, take a piece of wood two inches long and half an inch thick, make a hole in the centre of it, then put a nail through without a head, nail it down to the bottom of the trap, and let the nail ſtand up half an inch, in order to hang the bridge on: then take a piece of half inch board, five inches wide, and ſeven inches and a half long, make a hole at one end in the centre, and at the other end put a ſtrong bit of wire D, and let it come through the trig-

This is not warning

trigger hole B B, bent and turned up at the extremity a quarter of an inch, that it may hitch or faſten to the trigger, and over the trigger-hole about half an inch, nail a little piece of wood C about two inches long, in order to ſtop the tiller, to prevent its going into the trigger-hole; let your ſtandard E, at the top of the trap, be five inches high with a notch in the centre oppoſite the trigger hole; let it be half an inch wide and two inches down; then you muſt put a ſmall nail at each end, to both which tie a ſtring and bring them through the notch in the ſtandard and tie them both together; then cut one end off, and bringing the other end down tie it to the trigger, which is the ſmall piece of wood tied to the end of the ſtring, in order to ſet the

trap,

then they are ſo mad and furious that they will bite any thing.

I SHALL here give the reader another maxim I have often followed very ſucceſsfully; if you find the holes quiet and no rats to uſe them, it will then be incumbent on you to ſtop them up in this manner to prevent others from entering therein: Take a pint of common tar, half an ounce of pearl aſhes, an ounce of oil of vitriol, and a good handful of common ſalt, mix them all well together in any old deep pan; get ſome pieces of paper and put ſome of the above mixture very thick on the paper, and place enough of this into the holes ſufficient to ſtop them, and then let the bricklayer

make good after you; and if you ſhould find any of the holes opened again, it is certain you had not put in a ſufficient quantity, then put in ſome more, and if it is done as it ought, they will never approach there any more, while either ſmell or taſte remains in it; now by ſtopping the holes in the ſhores in town, where they come up, with the above mixture, I have kept a gentleman's houſe entirely clear and never have caught one ſingle Rat.

Now ſometimes they will get in behind the wainſcot and in the ceiling, in town, and not come out into the houſe, but remain there and become very troubleſome, and this is a very bad caſe: in order therefore to make them forſake theſe places, find out a ſmall

ſmall hole or crack, then take a handful of common ſalt and put it in at the hole or crack, and pour upon the ſalt a ſpoonful or two of the oil of vitriol, and this will make ſuch a fumigation or ſmoke, that they cannot bear it, then ſtop the hole or crevice again that the ſmoke may not come out, do this in two or three places as near where you hear they are as you can, and it will cauſe them to forſake thoſe places. This method is very ſafe, as no damage can poſſibly enſue to the wainſcot from the ſmoak.

I SHALL now point out a method to kill them where you cannot ſet a trap for them: Take a quart of the ſame food before made uſe of in taking them in traps, then raſp three figs of

nux vomica, add to theſe a quarter of a pound of crumb of bread, mix them all well together, and this will be their certain bane, but firſt give them ſome without the nux vomica figs for two or three ſucceeding nights, and when they find it agrees with them, they will then eat that mixed with the fig with great freedom and greedineſs.

I AM not much a friend to poiſoning Rats in houſes, except in caſes of neceſſity, but if it muſt be done, I would by no means recommend the uſe of arſenic, or corroſive ſublimate, which is too often practiſed, for then they creep into holes about the houſe, get between the cielings, and other places, and there die and occaſion a very diſagreeable ſmell; for as ſoon as they

they have taken enough of it, it is like a ſpark of fire in their bowels, and brings on an inſatiate thirſt, and they are reſtleſs and uneaſy till they get at ſomething to drink, either water, milk or beer, and then they die immediately; from this circumſtance it is evident what dangerous conſequences may ariſe, if any perſon ſhould drink any of the milk or beer where theſe vermin thus poiſoned, have been ſlavering and drinking; but ſometimes it is a difficult matter to make them ſwallow enough to kill them, for the moment they taſte the ſharp acid contained therein it corrodes the mouth and looſens the teeth, and then they will eat no more of it, whereas the mixture of the nux vomica before re-

commended is quite different, and if even tafted by any perfon, no fuch fatal effects can happen, for there is nothing but a little bitter tafte that is difagreeable; and they will take a quantity fufficient to kill them before they know it, and then they cannot get rid of it, for it throws them into fits, puts them to the greateft agony, and they die foon after; and in order to be more certain of its effects, I have kept them in a cage, and gave it them to try the experiment.

I CONCLUDE my account of the rat with the few following particulars, which I flatter myfelf will prove ufeful; they are often very troublefome in coming up the fhores, more efpecially in ftill-houfes and brew-houfes; now

now in the above inſtances or in any other ſhores where you cannot conveniently ſet a trap, I have practiſed the ſubſequent ſcheme with great ſucceſs, which although it does not deſtroy them, will infallibly drive them away: When you have catched ſome Rats and killed them, take ſome white arſenic finely powdered, put it into an old pepper box, and ſhake a quantity of it on the fore parts of the dead Rats, and put them down the holes or avenues by the ſides of the ſhores, where they come in at, which will put a ſtop to their coming any farther; for when they once perceive the arſenic, they will retire immediately, whereas if you was to put them down without the arſenic, the living Rats would eat the dead ones; I have ſeen one Rat kill

ano-

another when put into the large cage, and afterwards eat him; and once had an old ſhe Rat, big with young, which ſhe brought forth in the cage, and immediately eat them; for there is no kind of vermin whatever ſo ſavage, as a Norway Rat; again when you find they have taken to a rick of any ſort of corn or hay, take ſome dead Rats, put ſome arſenic over them, as before obſerved, then place one in each hole they have made in the thatch, and it will make them all forſake the rick; in like manner you may ſtop ſome of theſe Rats, ſerved as before, under the barn-floor, where the Rats uſe, and it will prevent others from taking ſhelter or harbouring under them; theſe vermin are likewiſe very fond of lying under the calve-pens, where they keep

ſnug

ſnug and warm, uſe the above method and it will drive them away; and alſo in any of their burrows, if you can put the dead Rats, prepared as above, ſo ſafe that nothing can eaſily get at them, and by obſerving theſe rules, you will obtain the deſired effect.

THE

THE

BLACK RAT.

THIS animal is the old genuine Engliſh Houſe-Rat, no other being known in and about houſes for many ages in this country, and differs in many particulars from the Norway Rat, laſt deſcribed, for they do not burrow and run into ſhores as the others do, but chiefly lie in the cielings and wainſcots in houſes, and in outhouſes they lie under the ridge-tiles and behind the raftors, and run along the ſide-plates; but their numbers are greatly diminiſhed to what they were for-

formerly, not many of them being now left, for the Norway Rats always drive them out and kill them wherever they can come at them; as a proof of which I was once exerciſing my employment at a gentleman's houſe, and when the night came that I appointed to catch, I ſet all my traps going as uſual, and in the lower part of the houſe in the cellars, I caught the Norway Rats, but in the upper part of the houſe, I took nothing but the black Rats; I then put them together into the great cage, to keep them alive till the morning, that the gentleman might ſee them, when the Norway Rats killed the black Rats immediately, and devoured them in my preſence.

THESE vermin are not near ſo bold, nor will feed ſo freely as the Norway Rat, and when you are troubled with any of them you muſt obſerve where they uſe, which you may do very eaſily, for if you go into any place and look up at the ſide-plates you will perceive they will be quite black where they run along them and likewiſe along the croſs beams; on theſe croſs beams place one of the traps you ſet for the Norway Rats, and put ſome of the ſame feed in them, but mix more bread in it than you did for the Norway Rat, and ſcent the trap in the ſame manner, and put ſome corn in of any ſort: ſet a trap at each place where they uſe and ſet them all to feed as you do the others for the Norway Rat; and when you perceive that they come to feed

boldly, then take them; but this muſt be done in the night, for they do not move by day-light as the other Rats will. By this method I catch them alive; but I have likewiſe taken them on the ſide plates and beams, where they run, in wires and in ſnares, ſo that they ſwing off the beams: they are not near ſo ſavage as the Norway Rats, for they ſeldom kill any chickens or any thing of that kind unleſs extremely hungry and ſharp ſet indeed, but they are ſly thieves for cheeſe, bacon, or any kind of eatables they can get at and pilfer.

THE

THE

WATER RAT.

THESE Rats lie always by the water ſide, and feed chiefly on graſs and vegetables, eating neither fleſh or corn, but they will devour green peas when in ſeaſon, if there are any growing near the ditches where they lie; theſe vermin do not much miſchief except in making holes in banks and ſpoiling fences; they make kennels or holes by the ſides of the ditches, very much reſembling thoſe of the otter, for they have one way out in the water, and another way out by land, in order to eſcape from their

enemies which ever way purſued. The method of taking them is by ſetting little hutch traps by the ſide of the ditch or pond where they lie, with wings made with buſhes or raiſed with mould, running a-ſlant from the trap as a guide for them to go in, ſuch as they have in warrens. Feed them with any thing green, ſuch as the hard part of a ſtalk cut out of a cabbage, or cabbage leaves, which they will eat; but do not ſet your traps going till they feed boldly, and give them ſome leaves regularly as you do the other Rats, their proper feed; tie ſome of theſe leaves in the trap, then you will be a judge of what comes to feed, elſe one will convey away as much as ten will eat, which occaſions you to conclude there are a great many of them. You

may take them another way, get ſome ſmall ſteel traps and put them in their runs, even with the ſurface of the ground, and covered over very nicely with the mould. Theſe vermin are ſomething like the Norway Rat, but ſmaller, their noſes and tails are ſhorter, and their heads rounder, or what is commonly termed, muff-headed.

THE SQUIRREL.

THESE little animals are admired for their beauty, and for the ſport they afford in hunting them among the trees: they are about the ſize of the ſtoat or cain, with a tail as large as their body, which they always turn up when they ſit ſtill, to keep their bodies warm; they are of a reddiſh colour, except under the belly, which is white; they make themſelves neſts or lodging places, commonly called drays, in a very neat manner, with ſmall ſticks, leaves and moſs, in the tops of the trees, where they hoard up nuts to ſerve them in the winter; but beſides

beſides theſe, they make a reſerve of nuts, acorns, and other things of a ſimilar nature in retired and bye places, which they know where to find in caſe the others ſhould be taken away, which often happens; they are chiefly hurtful in deſtroying wall-fruit, for they will run along the top of the wall, taking the firſt choice of the fruit, whether nectarines, peaches, apricots, &c. and do prodigious miſchief; I have caught them on the wall with a ſmall ſteel trap, covered nicely, and in wood-walks I have ſeen them take the eggs out of birds-neſts and break them, by that means deſtroying their neſts. Their fleſh is reckoned a great dainty by ſome perſons, and is ſaid to be ſuperior to veniſon in flavour.

THE

THE MOLE.

THIS animal is in ſome places, but chiefly in the north of England, called a Want, and contrary to moſt other vermin lives chiefly under ground, its ſkin is of a fine black jet colour, very ſmooth and ſoft, and has ſhort legs, with which they, with incredible ſwiftneſs, will dig themſelves into the earth when they apprehend any danger; they are ſuppoſed by ſome people to be entirely blind, it being in many places proverbial to ſay 'as blind

as

as a mole,' but this is a miſtake, for they have eyes as well as other vermin, but very ſmall, appearing ſcarcely larger than the head of a common pin, but ſufficient to ſerve their purpoſes, their reſidence being as was before obſerved, generally under the earth.

THESE animals do great miſchief in gardens, and grounds, and if you find they come, obſerve the outſides, for their angle or run; or if there is a path in a field, it is very probable they have a run acroſs the path, or at a gate-way they will frequently have one; theſe are what we call the main runs, and about two or three inches under the earth, and may very eaſily be found by the heaving up of the mould or earth, along which they will

run ten times in a day. When you have diſcovered one of theſe runs, you muſt tread in the earth tight, and when you come that way again, ſee whether it is as you left it, and if you perceive the mole has been along, then ſet a trap, by which means I have caught ſeveral of them in an afternoon; theſe being their main roads out of one part of the ground into another, for it will be of little ſignification to ſet a trap in any other angles or runs, and if you ſhould, it may poſſibly remain a long while before a Mole comes; for in ſpring when they run near the ſurface of the earth, they make a great many different angles in ſearch of the worms, on which and chaffers their chief food conſiſts.

Now

Now if they make hills in your fields or gardens, take notice of the places before mentioned, and ſet a trap in the following manner: Take a piece of board half an inch thick, four inches and a half long, by two and a half wide, then put a ſmall hoop or bow at each end, with juſt room for the Mole to go through; then in the centre, at each ſide, put two ſmall pegs, in order to keep them in the trap, for ſometimes one that is ſhy, when he finds the peg before him that ſprings the trap, will turn out at the ſide, ſpring the trap, and not be taken: it is neceſſary therefore to uſe theſe ſmall pegs, which will keep them in the ſtrait road, placed as before directed. In the next place, get two ſtrong horſe-hairs or pieces of ſmall wire, then in

the

the centre or middle of the bow, at each end make a hole to put the hair or wire through double, then open the hair or wire juſt to fit and lie cloſe inſide of the bow like a nooſe, get ſome fine mould, make it moiſt like paſte, and work ſome of it with your finger and thumb all round in the inſide of the bow; ſo that the horſe-hair or wire may not be perceivable. Through the hole in the centre of the trap let a ſhort bit of ſtring come. Put a forked peg tight in the hole, that may keep the ſtring from ſlipping through, till the Mole, when going through puſhes it out; then the ſtring ſlips up. When you have thus prepared the trap, then open one of theſe runs, exactly the length of the trap, and put it down in the run quite level, and make it all ſmooth, that there may be

no light diſcovered. Then take three good ſtrong hooked pegs, two on one ſide, and one on the other, and ſtick them down tight, then take a good ſtiff ſtick about four feet long, ſtick one end in the ground tight, bring the other end down to the trap and hitch in a loop, that comes from the hair or wire, and then it is ſet, and when the Mole comes he puſhes out this little peg, then the ſtring draws out, the bow-ſtick flies up, and the Mole is caught; in the ſpring-time when you catch a ſhe Mole, rub her back-part about the bows and the inſide of the trap, by which means I have caught eight he Moles ſucceſſively; obſerve, when you have caught all that you perceive to move, you need only look round the outſide of your fields, and keep

keep ſome traps conſtantly going there, and they will lay hold of them as they come in and out; another expedient you may make uſe of, by putting ſome dead Moles in the runs where they come in, which prevents their coming, and keep your ground quiet and free from theſe troubleſome vermin.

THE

HOUSE-MOUSE.

THESE are a naſty little vermin, well known, and are very nauſeous, for wherever they come, whether in the pantry or larder, you may eaſily diſcover it, by the diſagreeable ſmell they leave behind them. They are very troubleſome in dairies, where they will ſkim the milk, and will get into bird cages after the ſeed, and kill the birds, and are miſchievous in other inſtances, of which no mention needs here to be made. Many perſons would doubtleſs be glad to be informed of a

method to kill theſe vermin, which is done very eaſily; and to accompliſh it, nothing is ſo good as nux vomica; take a quart of the feed above preſcribed for the rat, before there is any bread mixed with it, then take four figs of nux vomica, and raſp them very fine, or elſe they will pick the feed from it upon account of the bitter taſte; rub it well together, and it will be their certain bane. My method of laying it is after this manner; if they come into the larder at night, put the bread into a pan, and take the other eatables out of the way; then lay ſome of the feed on a piece of paper, and do this in two or three other places, which will not be attended with any danger, however for fear of any accident, what is not eaten take away in the morning,

ing, and at night lay it down again, and ſo keep on as long as any come; in the dairy do the ſame, or in any other place where they appear; I have found ſeveral lie dead on the paper at one time, but remember always to lay the ingredient on paper, then you may take away what is left.

THE

THE

FIELD-MOUSE.

THIS is a larger Mouſe than the former, being the largeſt of the Mouſe kind, with a reddiſh back and a good deal of white under the belly. They abound in gardens, and frequently ſwarm in prodigious numbers in the fields: they will eat either corn or fleſh juſt as it comes in their way. I have ſeen five or ſix of them by moon-light attack a large toad and kill it, which they do often; and when I have been trailing for a fox in the night, I have obſerved, by turning the light round, ſeve-

ſeveral of theſe Field-Mice following the trail. They are more difficult to deſtroy than the Houſe-Mice, on account that they are ſhy in taking any bait: however, ſometimes, when I have been going to catch a fox, I have been obliged to put ſome of the feed (ſo often before mentioned) in the ſhrape, in order to kill the Mice, before I could get any to lie for the fox. In winter they will likewiſe come into houſes at the ſink holes, and get into the pantries, larders, and dairies, being driven from the fields by extremity of hunger, and prove very troubleſome and pernicious; and in ſpring they will get into the gardens, and eat whole rows or drills of peas, after they are ſet: I can give no better method to deſtroy theſe vermin, than to lay ſome

of

of the above feed for them, as you do for the other, on a tile, and ſhelter it with ſome pieces of old boards, that it may not get wet : lay it out at night, and take it in again in the morning, and all that eat of it will certainly die.

THE

THE

RED SHREW-MOUSE.

THIS ſpecies of the Mouſe-kind has a noſe like a mole, and is in general a very harmleſs, inoffenſive, little animal, living, in regard to its preying on any thing: it is much ſmaller than the Houſe-Mouſe. The chief miſchief done by theſe vermin is, that in harveſt time, they will come home with the corn, remain there, and breed. I have known great numbers taken out of a rick; and I once remember half a buſhel of theſe, and other Mice, caught at one time

out of a rick or ſtand, which is often owing to the farmer's own negligence and inattention; for you may often ſee a rick-ſtand made a nurſery, occaſioned by putting under it harrows, plows, hurdles, and props: what avails it then to have a ſtand to fill the ricks in this manner, and aſſiſt the vermin up? You cannot indeed prevent their coming home with the corn, or when rats hop up and down the ſtand, which they do very eaſily: the beſt method, therefore, would be to nail ſome tin to the props, which would keep the Mice from getting up them; and when once you find they have got to a corn-rick, the beſt way is for you to take it in as ſoon as you can, for theſe Mice in one particular are worſe than the Rats among the corn, and do a great deal more

more miſchief; for this reaſon, that they will live a great while without water, only by licking the ends of the ſtraws, while any moiſture remains therein, and all the while they remain in the ricks, they do infinite prejudice. If it is not convenient to remove the rick, obſerve the following method: take a quarter of a pound of the beſt nux vomica, put it into an old ſauce-pan, with three quarts of water, boil it till it comes to two quarts, and put two pounds of treacle to it, in order to overcome the bitter taſte of the nux vomica; then take ſome ſmall earthen pans, into which pour ſome of this mixture, and ſet the pans in different places under the eves of the ricks; the mice being in want of water, will greedily drink of the mixture, which

will kill them; and this method you muſt continue till they are deſtroyed.

Before I conclude this account, I cannot help taking notice of a groſs blunder which a certain writer has made in his deſcription of this little vermin, who aſſerts that it is as large as a rat, of the colour of a weaſel, and very miſchievous to cattle, and that it will get upon a beaſt's back, and make it lame in the chine; and in conſequence of the bite, the beaſt will ſwell to the heart and die; all which particulars are entirely erroneous; for its ſize is leſs than that of the common Houſe-Mouſe, its colour like the ſquirrel; and as to the miraculous affair of its killing any beaſt or cattle, it is of a piece

a piece with the reſt. On the contrary, I am convinced from long obſervation, that it feeds on roots, vegetables and corn, and will not touch fleſh on any account.

THE

BLACK SHREW-MOUSE.

THIS animal has a noſe like a mole, and much reſembles the red Shrew-Mouſe, laſt deſcribed, except in colour; they are very harmleſs little creatures; for they ſeldom come to barns or ricks, their reſidence being among the graſs, by the ſides of ditches, which they feed on. You may often hear them, as you are walking along, ſqueaking by the path's ſide, and making a noiſe ſomething like the graſs-hopper; but they do not the leaſt miſchief

miſchief that I know of: I thought proper however to mention them, that the reader might know ſuch a little animal really exiſts.

THE

THE

GRASS-MOUSE.

THIS Mouſe is rather larger than the common Mouſe, with a muff-head like a water-rat, and a ſhort club tail, looking as if the top was cut off, and has a great deal of the nature and diſpoſition of that animal, for it eats no corn at all, but lives on graſs and vegetables, being of a very harmleſs nature, it is a prey to other vermin, as the water-rat is, (ſuch as ſtoats and weaſels) which are the worſt enemies it has.

THE

THE

DORMOUSE.

THIS is a ſmall red Mouſe with a tail like a ſquirrel, and is the moſt harmleſs and inoffenſive of all the Mouſe-tribe. It is a very beautiful tame little animal, and is kept by many perſons in ſmall boxes or cages, and fed with crumbs of bread, &c. They have one ſingular and peculiar quality, which is that of ſleeping for ſeveral weeks together, without receiving the leaſt ſuſtenance, and appearing all the while as if dead. You may oftentimes find

find them in dry banks, or in wood, laid up very warm in a neſt in the ground made with oak-leaves, and always aſleep when you diſcover them.

THE

THE

BAT.

THIS little animal is half mouſe, half bird, having wings ſomething reſembling leather, and a head very much like that of the mouſe, except that their noſe is flatter, and their mouth wider; they keep cloſe in holes all the day and never fly abroad till the evening and that in the ſummer time, for which reaſon they are called in many places the winged mouſe; they live chiefly on flies and other ſmall inſects, and dwell in holes under the roofs of houſes, churches, barns, ruinated buildings, and in the holes of hollow trees, where in winter time I

have ſometimes found ſeveral ſcores of them cloſely adhering together, in large cluſters and in a torpid ſtate, in which condition theſe do doubtleſs remain till vivified again by the enlivening warmth of the ſun, on the approach of the ſummer. I have been more particular in my account and deſcription of the different kinds of mice, as perhaps many of my readers might be unacquainted, that there are ſo many diſtinct ſpecies of the mouſe-kind.

THE

THE

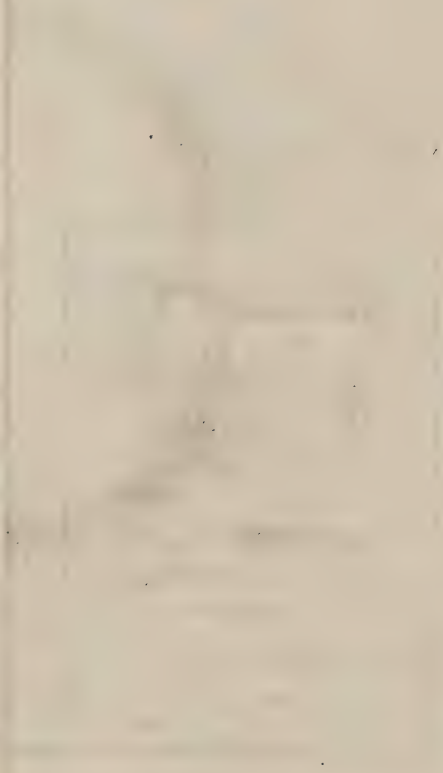
LARGE BLACK EAGLE

BUZZARD.

HAVING finiſhed my account of the four-footed vermin, I now come to deſcribe the winged-tribe of vermin, inhabitants of the air, which notwithſtanding often deſcend to earth and do much miſchief; I ſhall begin with the black Eagle-Buzzard, which is one of the largeſt and fierceſt birds of the hawk-kind that breeds in England.

THIS bird frequents parks and warrens, and often catches leverets, young rabbits and pheaſants, or any thing

elſe that moves as ſoon as the morning-light approaches, for they are a very early bird; in winter-time I have caught them in a ſteel trap, the ſame as is ſet in a cube for a dog; bait it with the guts of rabbits or fowls, or ſome pieces of rabbits that you find dead by accident; in ſpring I have caught them in ſteel traps, with the ſkin of a young rabbit ſtuffed and tied to the bridge, but after the young rabbits begin to be able to run about, they ſometimes are ſhy and will not ſtrike at a rabbit, unleſs they ſee him run; the ſteel traps that you ſet for this vermin, ſhould ſtrike ſeven or eight inches high, in order to clear the bait as it ought to be, otherwiſe the jaws might only catch the bait and miſs the vermin; I have ſometimes caught them



CUBE for WINGED VERMIN.

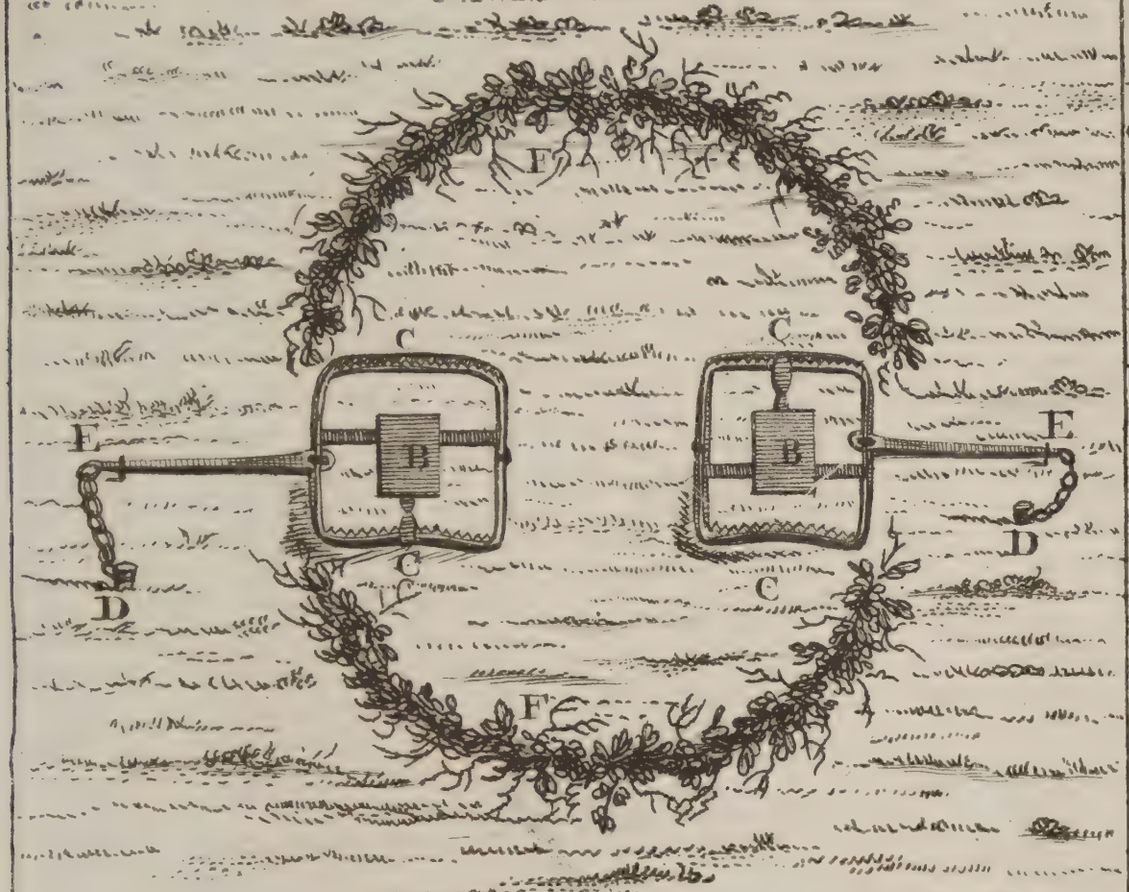


Fig. I.

The FOX TRAP struck.

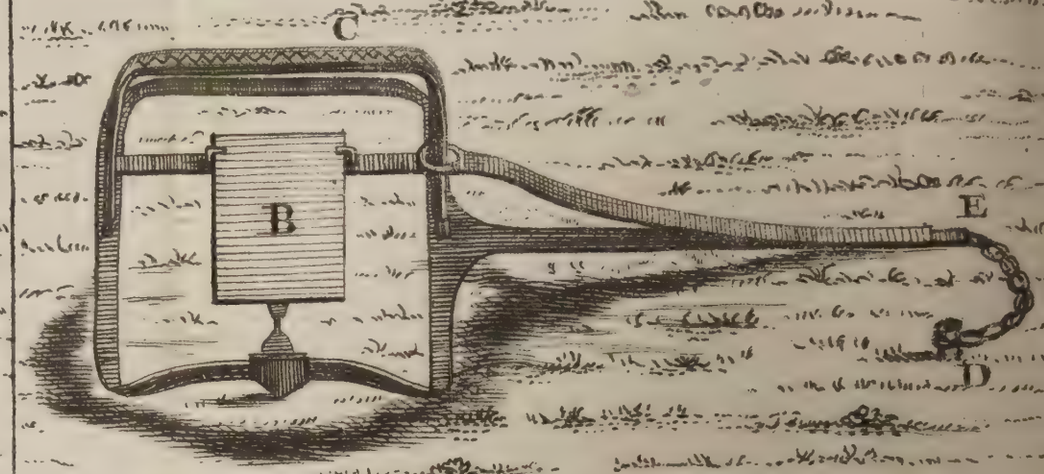


Fig. II.

them with a rat in the following manner: ſet two traps in the manner as you ſee in plate VI. fig. 1. head to head, covered very nicely with moſs, then round the circle as in the ſame plate, put ſome ſmall pieces of fern or a buſh or two quite low, that the bait may be viſible and open; put the bait, whatever it may be, in the middle between the two traps, then he muſt of neceſſity go over one of them, in order to get the bait, and by this means I have often caught him. Sometimes you may obſerve him to haunt a place in a warren or park for a week or fortnight together, then ſet your traps in the ſame method as before laid down, and you will be almoſt certain of taking him. Let your bait be a dead rat, if you can procure one.

THE GREY BOB-TAILED BUZZARD, OR PUTTOCK.

THIS bird is much of the ſame nature as the former, in haunting parks and warrens, for the deſtruction of rabbits, and pheaſants, going in ſearch of them when the morning light appears. In this reſpect, however, it differs from the Eagle Buzzard, that it is ſmaller. You may catch them with the ſteel trap, above deſcribed, baited with the entrails of fowls

fowls or rabbits, or with ſome of the pieces of rabbits which may have been accidentally killed. They are to be caught eaſieſt in winter time, for then I have known them haunt one place for a month together in a warren, where you may eaſily catch them, as at that ſeaſon they are ſhort and deſtitute of food.

THE

THE

LARGE FORKED TAIL-

K I T E.

THIS is the largeſt and heavieſt bird of the hawk-kind in England, but not near ſo fierce as the Eagle buzzard, being rather of a ſluggiſh and indolent diſpoſition, not caring much to hunt after prey; but when the other kites and hawks have killed any birds, they come upon them, and beat them away and then devour the birds themſelves; they chiefly dwell in woods and deſart places, and frequent the ſides of rivers and brooks, being fond of fiſh, and often eat the tails of the fiſhes, which the otters have left behind

behind them; you may catch them by ſetting two traps in the ſame manner as you do for the buzzard; bait them with a piece of fiſh, if you have it, or with a rat, or the guts of fowls or rabbits, and when once you diſcover the places they haunt, you may catch them with the greateſt facility.

THE

LARGE BLUE SHERARD

K I T E.

THIS kind of Kite frequents foreſts, heaths, and other loneſome places, but eſpecially bogs and marſhy grounds, where they deſtroy great numbers of ſnipes, to which they are the worſt enemy of any bird of prey of the hawk kind; they beat all over the bog with the greateſt regularity and exactneſs, till they find them lying: for the nature of the ſnipe is, if they perceive their enemy in the purſuit, they lie as cloſe to the ground as poſſible when the Kite pounces upon

on them directly and takes them. I have obſerved one of theſe vermin beating at one end of a bog or marſhy piece of ground; and at the other end, I have ſtooped down till he has come up cloſe to the place where I was, he looking ſtedfaſtly down for his prey, regardleſs of any thing elſe, and when he came near enough I have ſhot him; ſometimes they will have a beat croſs a warren, where I have caught them in traps baited with what is termed a ſtall, which is a young rabbit's ſkin ſtuffed.

THESE vermin are very remarkable for one particular circumſtance, for at any time when you obſerve any of them come along in the morning, you will be certain of ſeeing them return the

the ſame way back again in the afternoon, and three or four ſucceeding mornings they will have the ſame beat, if they are not frightened or diſturbed; whenever, therefore, you ſee one go along in the morning, get a trap ſet ready againſt his return, baited with a rabbit's ſkin ſtuffed and put on the bridge of the trap, as before directed, but remember to cover the trap nicely with moſs; if you ſet it in a green ſward, then cover it with graſs, and in this manner I have often taken them; I have likewiſe caught them by means of two ſteel traps, ſet in the ſame manner as for the buzzard; but always mind when you ſet traps in this manner, to faſten down the bait between them with a peg, otherwiſe they will frequently take it away and

not ſtrike the trap; but when the bait is fixed they cannot get it away, but are conſtrained to ſtop, when by hopping and picking about, they ſpring the trap and are caught.

THE

THE

BLUE SHERARD

HAWK.

THIS bird in many reſpects reſembles the blue kite, laſt deſcribed in haunting heaths, foreſts, and lonely places; eſpecially quags and marſhy grounds, doing much miſchief, eſpecially among the ſnipes. You will always be ſure of ſeeing him return home by the ſame path, in the afternoon, by which he purſued his flight in the morning; but he is not ſo large, and preys in much the ſame manner, but does not however, frequent warrens ſo often as the other; you may

catch them by the ſame method as the Sherard Kite, with a rabbit's ſkin ſtuffed and put on the bridge of the trap, remembering to cover the trap nicely with moſs or graſs, obſerving the directions before given.

THE LARGE

BROWN WHITE ARSE

RING TAILED

HAWK,

IS the moſt pernicious and miſchievous Hawk that flies; but eſpecially in deſtroying that admired game the partridge, which it takes, not ſo much by ſwift flying, as by the following manner, or ſtratagem: viz. when they find a covey and ſpring them, they fly after them as faſt as they are able, and mark where they pitch down again, and then ſpring them again, and thus

keep following them till they catch their prey; for partridges, when they are driven hard for three flights, become ſo tired and languid that they are eaſily taken; I have ſometimes obſerved one of theſe Hawks in full purſuit after a poor partridge, almoſt ſpent, when the Hawk has ſuddenly ſtopped and alighted on a tree in the next hedge, to which I imagined the partridge had taken, as they frequently do, when they are almoſt tired or down. On this I got near enough the Hawk, being intent and earneſt after his prey, ſhot him dead, and on examining, to my great ſurprize, found that the partridge, being driven by the Hawk, had taken refuge in a hutch trap, that ſtood on the other ſide of the hedge, where the Hawk had mark-

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ed it, and ſat watching for its coming out again; theſe vermin will keep their walk or beat for ſome time very regularly. I have caught them in a trap, baited with a rabbit ſkin ſtuffed, as before obſerved.

THE

THE

SMALL RING TAILED

HAWK,

IS the largeſt of the Sparrow-Hawk kind, and is a very fierce and pernicious bird, deſtroying young ducks and chickens, in yards, &c. about farm houſes, in the fields they kill blackbirds, thruſhes, and in the winter-ſeaſon fieldfares and other ſmall birds; I have driven one from a blackbird, and immediately ſet down a ſteel trap covered quite ſmoothly, placing the ſame bird on the bridge of the trap and have taken the Hawk, which returned ſoon after for its prey. They will likewiſe frequently come to the chic-

chicken gardens and pheaſantries, when you muſt ſet a ſteel trap baited with a dead chicken or any other of the birds before mentioned, which they delight to feed on, and in all probability you will lay hold of them, and if you find they have been made ſhy, by reaſon of the trap ſtriking, and not catching them, which will ſometimes, tho' very rarely, happen, you may deſtroy them after the following manner, take a live chicken, tie it to a ſmall ſtake drove in the ground by one of the legs, laying ſome bread or corn for it to feed on; then get out of ſight with your gun and the hawk will come and ſtrike at the chicken, when you may eaſily ſhoot him, and this method I have often practiſed with good ſucceſs.

THE

THE SMALL SPARROW HAWK.

BIRDS which fly wild in the fields, are the chief prey of this little Hawk. It very ſeldom deſtroys chickens or any other kind of poultry, unleſs driven by the greateſt extremity of hunger; I have driven them from a bird and caught them in a ſteel trap as I have the others, having been allowed ſo much per head for all the winged vermin, as well as others, that I deſtroyed, which made me very anxious and aſſiduous in trying and inventing various methods to deſtroy them.

THE

THE

SMALL BLACK HEADED

SPARROW HAWK.

I NEVER caught this Hawk in a trap, but have ſhot ſeveral of them; it is a very beautiful bird, and has a black head, with pointed wings, and is very quick and ſharp after its prey, which are ſmall birds of every kind. It is more timid than the laſt mentioned Hawk, and is ſeldom ſeen, there being but few of them in England. On which account we need not dwell minutely upon him.

THE

THE WIND-HOVER HAWK.

YOU may often ſee this little brown Hawk, the ſmalleſt of the ſpecies, hovering in the air, then they ſteadily look down on the ground, and if they chance to ſee a mouſe, they will dart with incredible ſwiftneſs, like an arrow out of a bow, and catch it; ſometimes they will catch a mole, and I have frequently taken this kind of Hawk in a ſteel trap by laying one of theſe animals on the bridge; and with this I conclude my account of the birds

of the Hawk kind. The three laſt mentioned indeed do not much damage or miſchief, but if I had not mentioned them the catalogue of them would have been incomplete, beſides I flatter myſelf it will be acceptable to my readers, ſome of whom might poſſibly not be acquainted that there were ſo many different kinds of Hawks, which breed in England.

THE

THE

BROWN

WOOD OWL.

FEW perſons perhaps imagine this to be a pernicious animal, yet in my opinion, it is the very worſt winged vermin that exiſts; they ſeize their prey with great fierceneſs, and break it up exactly as the cat does, by beginning at the fore part; and it is very happy for the farmer and others, who keep poultry that the ducks and chickens are gone to rooſt before the Owl comes to prey in the night, otherwiſe there would be few, if any of them left; however I now proceed to make

good my aſſertion, and deſcribe the infinite miſchief done by this ſort of Owls. When the evening approaches, many animals ſuch as leverets, young rabbits, young pheaſants, or young partridges, who had lain quiet in the day-time, come out to feed in the ſtillneſs and ſilence of the evening, when there is nothing elſe to diſturb them, the Owl then comes, when they are expoſed, and takes away what he pleaſes, and if they happen to have young ones at the ſame time it is impoſſible to conceive what numbers will be taken away in a night's time to ſatisfy his voracious appetite; and this I can affirm from my own obſervation, as I uſed to make it my frequent practice to go out and hunt the Owls all round the outſides of the warren. The

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method was this, two of us uſed to go with a gun, one on one ſide of the hedge and the other on the other ſide; a third perſon accompanying us with a long pole or a ſtick, who therewith beat the hollow trees and ivy trees, when the Owls would fly out, and we have ſhot ſometimes a dozen in the morning. But one morning particularly I found an Owl's neſt, and ſhot the hen; and, on examining the neſt, I found two young ones, with ſeveral pieces of young rabbits, leverets, &c. therein: but we could not meet with the old cock; on which I took out one of the young ones, leaving the other in order to entice him home to the neſt again; the next morning I repaired to the place, when he flew out,

and I ſhot him dead, and took away the other young one, which had been left behind. But, what is remarkable, the old Owl had carried no leſs than three young rabbits to the ſingle young one remaining, in one night's time; which is an evident proof what havoc they make among the game. Another particular of theſe vermin deſerves mentioning, which is, that they ſeldom eat more than the fore quarters of any animal they kill, as the cat does, and always leave the hind quarters untouched behind them, which are found in the neſt. I have likewiſe caught them in moonlight evenings in ſteel traps, baited with a rabbit-ſkin ſtuffed, and have often killed many of them with a gun, by keeping cloſe under

der the hedge, and imitating the ſqueaking of a mouſe; when the Owl has come directly to the place, and I have ſhot him dead on the ſpot.

THE

THE

LIGHT COLOURED BARN

OR

SCREECH OWL.

THIS kind of Owl is a very beautiful bird, of a paliſh brown colour, a little ſpotted, and white on the breaſt; doing more good than harm, for it ſeldom preys on any thing but mice, which it will watch for in the barns like a cat, and deſtroy great numbers of that little vermin. On this account theſe Owls are encouraged by the farmers. If you ſhould ſee one of

of them, mimick the ſqueaking of the mouſe, and he will come up to you directly, and you may eaſily ſhoot him, as was before obſerved of the Wood-Owl.

THE

HORNED OWL.

HAS its name from the feathers which ſtand up on each ſide of his head, reſembling two horns, and making a very beautiful appearance. There are many people, who do not believe there are any Owls of this ſpecies bred amongſt us; the large brown horned Owl, (which is bigger than our largeſt birds of prey, whether kite or buzzard) is indeed brought from foreign parts, and is eſteemed a very great curioſity, but never breeds here, which this little Horned-Owl does, and much

much reſembles the large one, only in miniature. I have ſhot ſeveral of them on Windſor-Foreſt: they do no miſchief that I could ever learn, however, I thought it proper to mention them, that the reader may be aſſured there is ſuch a bird exiſting.

THE

THE FERN OWL, OR NIGHT JAR.

THIS is a very harmleſs bird, about the ſize of the ſmall Sparrow-Hawk, of a dark colour, and with a large mouth. They never go out till the evening, and then catch beetles and other inſects for their ſubſiſtence.

THE

RAVEN.

THIS is the largeſt bird that feeds on carrion, and is of a fine, ſhining colour; in ſome places it is very ſerviceable, in eating up the ſtinking fleſh or carcaſſes of dead beaſts and other carrion, but in many other places very miſchievous, and does a great deal of harm. I having been allowed as much per head for killing them as I had for kites and hawks, as they are equally pernicious in killing and devouring young rabbits, ducklings, and young chickens.

I KNOW

I KNOW of no better way to catch them where they become troubleſome, than to ſet two traps for them, in the ſame manner you do for the buzzard, [ſee plate VI. fig. 1.] and put a rat between them for a bait, but when you have taken one or two, you muſt move your traps to another place; or the others will prove too ſhy to be caught; for as ſoon as one is taken, great numbers will keep round him, and ſeeing him faſt, will grow ſuſpicious of ſome danger and not come near the place any more; but by obſerving the above method in moving the traps I have caught great numbers of them in a day, though it is attended with ſome labour and trouble.

I HAVE often caught the London Ravens near twenty miles from home in warrens, where they will ſometimes come after the young rabbits; by the London Ravens I mean thoſe that generally frequent the outſkirts of the metropolis, and live upon the filth lying there, grubbing up the dirt, in order to get at their food, from whence the tops of their wings become of a naſty, duſky brown colour, occaſioned by their wallowing in the dirt, by which means they are eaſily diſtinguiſhable from the country Ravens which are as black as jet, according to the old ſaying, 'as black as a Raven.'

I have ſeen ſome of theſe Ravens fix upon a lamb, that has been dropped weak, not being able to run, when they

they have got to his head and picked out the creature's eyes while yet alive. Another remark I ſhall make, which is to point out the difference between the manner of birds of the Hawk-kind carrying their prey, and thoſe of the carrion kind. Now it is obſervable that buzzards, kites, hawks, and owls, conſtantly carry their prey in their claws, whereas Ravens, carrion-crows and magpies carry their food in their beaks.

THE CARRION CROW.

THIS bird is well known, and in country places will do prodigious miſchief, by deſtroying young rabbits, chickens and ducks, and likewiſe in ſucking eggs, which the hens and ducks lay in the back-yards, or in the hedges; theſe the crows will break and eat as greedily as any other vermin whatever. Now if you find they have any haunts about your houſe, get a ſteel trap, of the ſame kind as you uſe for other winged vermin; ſet it in the ground

ground quite level with the ſurface, and cover it with moſs; then take a little piece of buſh or ſome fern, ſtick ſome of it down by one jaw quite low, and bring it round to the other jaw, [ſee plate VI. fig. 1.] put the bait, whether it be an egg or rat, a piece of rabbit, or the guts of the ſame, or any thing elſe of this ſort, in the back part on the tail of the trap; and when you have put a little fence before deſcribed all around, as a guide for him, he muſt of neceſſity go over the trap for the bait, and be caught; but I have been plagued with theſe as much as I have been with the Ravens, by being obliged to move the trap after every crow I had taken; but by obſerving when one is caught, which you may eaſily hear; for they then make a great noiſe and keep

keep flying round their impriſoned brother, almoſt cloſe to the ground, you may then probably get a ſhoot, and kill ſome of them; but ſometimes I have known them ſo ſhy that I could not get them to the trap at any rate. In this caſe you muſt obſerve the places where they moſt frequent, and take a cat, and ſometimes a ferret, and ſtake it down tied to the ſtake with a ſtring. Then take a gun, and hide yourſelf, when the firſt crow that ſees the cat or ferret will make a terrible ſcreaming noiſe, and bring many more, who ſcream and hover about, till you have a fair ſhoot. In this manner I have had ſometimes three or four ſhoots before they diſperſed, and killed ſeveral of them; for when they ſee any kind of animal they are not uſed to in

the

the day-time, it greatly attracts their attention, and they wonder at it, as the ſmall birds do at the ſight of an owl by day-light; and this is the beſt way to get at the ſhy ones. I have ſeen the crows pick out the eyes of a weak lamb while alive in the ſame manner as the ravens will.

THE

THE

MAGPYE.

THIS is a very miſchievous bird, doing great damage in warrens, and much of the ſame nature as the crow, preying on all kinds of fleſh, and carrion, like that animal. They are extremely pernicious about farm-yards and houſes, killing and devouring young ducks and chickens, and likewiſe in ſucking and deſtroying eggs in great numbers, about farm-houſes, where the hens lay them by the ſides of the rick-yards and under the hedges. Where you find they become

come troubleſome in the above inſtances, ſet your trap (where you obſerve them to come) in the ſame manner as you do for the crow; bait it with a rat, which is as good a bait as any, or with an egg; or if they have killed any young ducks or chickens and have not devoured them, at that place where you find them ſet your trap, and bait with the dead duckling or chicken, and you need not fear catching them: but be careful to obſerve the following rule, which is, as ſoon as one of the magpies is trapped to take it out as ſoon as poſſible, in order to ſet your trap again. You may eaſily diſcover this event, for as ſoon as one is taken in the trap, it makes a ſcreaming noiſe, which brings great numbers of theſe vermin together, who come hovering, and

and flying over their captive brother, which will give you a fair opportunity of ſhooting among them, and deſtroying many. This method I often put into execution, and it has been attended with very good ſucceſs.

FINIS.